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Weekend, April 21-24, 2011
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News worth sharing.

Egg-cellent.

▶ Four-year-old Pierce Howard, left, Quinton Cuberos, 7, and Sebastian Cuberos, 5, hug their pal the Easter Bunny at the London District Children's Museum on Wednesday. Story, page 4.

KYLE REA/METRO

Rabbit running rampant through Forest City

Everyone's favourite rabbit will be out and about this weekend at various Easter events, including an Easter Eggstravaganza at the Children's Museum, running Saturday through Monday.

'We want more control': McGuinty tells Ottawa

Province asks for power over immigration programs — the same as other provinces have

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ontario wants Ottawa to give it the same immigration powers as other provinces, Premier Dalton McGuinty said Wednesday.

Immigration policies under both federal Liberal and Conservative governments have been "tilted" in favour of Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia, McGuinty said.

"Each of those three provinces have more control over immigration than we do here in Ontario, and so far the federal government is refusing to give us the same controls," he said. "We want more control over the funds that arrive here. Just give us the money and we'll deal directly with our settlement agencies."

There would be costs associated with that, McGuinty said, but he wasn't sure what the dollar figure would be.

▶ Premier Dalton McGuinty

Ontario was shortchanged $200 million under the just-expired immigration deal with Ottawa, which also cut $44 million in funding to settlement agencies in the province, said McGuinty.

"That's not right," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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1 news

Cops make arrests at pot rally

At least three people were arrested Wednesday during a protest by marijuana enthusiasts in Victoria Park.

More than 300 showed up to attend the protest, intended in part as a push to legalize marijuana.

The time and date, 4/20, were picked as a reference to the popular time among marijuana enthusiasts.

As 4:20 p.m. arrived, people in the crowd began singing Auld Lang Syne and two men could be seen with lit joints in their hands.

But when police moved in and took at least three people into custody, the crowd became angry, shouting expletives at officers and screaming "Boo!" and "Let them go!"

Protester Robert Coddington wondered why police were busting peaceful protesters who gathered to smoke pot and not go after those hawking Oxycontin.

"It's a huge problem in our society today which is destroying our communities all over this country. And yet we can't get the police to come in force to Dundas and Richmond and get them to arrest the Oxycontin dealers," he said, shouting through a loud speaker.

"I want everyone to know that 4/20 is a political celebration to say to our government — we want this drug legalized!"

KYLE REA

KYLE REA/METRO

▶ A man who identified himself as Robin Boute takes a drag off a joint at exactly 4:20 p.m. Wednesday in Victoria Park.

Verdi's Requiem a 'soul-stirring' work

Trio of local musicians to perform one of music's most poignant pieces

KYLE REA
@METRONEWS.CA

It's considered one of the most powerful pieces of music in history.

And it's coming to Centennial Hall on Good Friday.

Fanshawe Chorus Players, the Gerald Fagan Singers and the Concert Players Orchestra are teaming up to present Giuseppe Verdi's opera oratio, Requiem.

Conductor Gerald Fagan said it's a very popular and well-loved piece of music that's not often performed because of the cost.

Indeed, 160 players and soloists are involved in Friday's production.

And, Fagan noted, it's a difficult piece of music to master, requiring plenty of practice.

But it can be a transcendent piece of music, well-suited to be performed on Good Friday.

"It's one of the most soul-stirring pieces in music history ... All the instruments playing and all the singers singing, it's massive. But then there are some very tender solos opposite that. Soulful singing," Fagan said.

"For the soloist, sometimes it's a very personal experience ... It becomes a personal statement of faith for them."

The concert begins at 7 p.m. Friday. Tickets are $30 for adults, $15 for students and are available at the Centennial Hall box office, 519-672-1967.

History

Verdi's Requiem, first performed in 1874, was intended as a Catholic funeral mass.

- It's the fourth time Fagan has conducted Requiem.
- The performance is approximately an hour and 20 minutes.

For more news metronews.ca/london

KYLE REA/METRO

▶ Conductor Gerald Fagan leads his players and soloists through a rehearsal for Friday's performance of Verdi's Requiem. Alto singer Sandra Graham can be seen in the background.

Excited about landing that internship? A new book says maybe you shouldn't be. Scan code for story.

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Just in case you're the kind of person to have a royal wedding viewing party, here's what to feed your guests. Video at metronews.ca

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No need to hunt for Easter weekend fun

Everyone's favourite rabbit will be out this weekend at various events, including Easter Eggstravaganza at Children's Museum running Saturday through Monday

Egg-cited about Easter and looking for something to do until the ever-famous bunny does his annual duty on Sunday? Check out these events for a sweet time.

Grab Fido's leash and head out to the Middlesex Agility Club, 9282 Elviage Dr., on Good Friday for the annual Easter Egg hunt for dogs. Kicking off at 11 a.m., dogs and their owners will hunt for thousands of plastic Easter eggs with tasty treats hidden inside. It's a fundraiser for National Service Dogs — an organization that helps children living with autism. Registration is $20 per family and begins at 10 a.m.

Saturday, a quick stop over at Citi Plaza mall (formerly Galleria mall) should yield plenty of chocolatey goodness as there's an Easter Egg hunt that runs 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Not only is the candy free but there's face painting, games and a visit with the Easter bunny available for the young or, for that matter, the young at heart.

And speaking of young Easter fans, the London Children's Museum will have Easter activities from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Saturday to Monday. Cookie decorating is held each day at 10 a.m. with an egg hunt from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. KYLE REA

KYLE REA/METRO

▶ Madelynn McLaughlin, 5, gets up close and personal with the Easter bunny at the London Regional Children's Museum.

Downtown renewal at pivotal juncture

The next steps are important ones to continue the rejuvenation of downtown, and city hall wants to pick your brain about it.

"Yeah, you could put it that way," said Ward 13 Coun. Judy Bryant. "Where should the next energy centre be, and what would it look like?"

Everyone is welcome to attend the Downtown Summit taking place Wednesday night at the Covent Garden market mezzanine. But please register first, just so they can do a head count for beverages.

What's on the agenda is what's next for downtown. One possible discussion: The location of city hall.

CONTRIBUTED

▶ Coun. Judy Bryant

"Are we going to add on to this one here that we have, or are we going to perhaps move downtown?" said Bryant. "If we're to move downtown, could we leverage perhaps more than just one building?

"That's the way we're looking at it, and we're open to hearing from people." Lots of people.

Bryant said she'd like to see the core population triple: Her London of the future contains more residential spaces downtown to help attract younger citizens.

"That's a very positive thing when we're looking to continue to attract people to London and keep more of the young people here," she said. JIM REYNO

Where, when, how

The summit is Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. at the Covent Garden.

▶ To register, visit downtowncoresummit.eventbrite.com.

Donate some free time

Tickets are still available for the second London Timeraiser on Tuesday night at 7 p.m. at the London Mansion.

The Timeraiser is part volunteer fair, part silent art auction and part night on the town.

Throughout the evening, attendees bid volunteer hours auction-style on various non-profit agencies whose needs match the bidders' skills. METRO

Cops charge 8 following drug bust

Police arrested 11 people, including one young offender, after a search warrant executed on Horton Street revealed marijuana, crack cocaine and cocaine powder.

Charged are: Giovani Crooks-Grant, 20; Sidney Dolson, 32; Adrian Simon, 42; Isaac Tycie, 30; Manzil Toto, 22; Drai Ohara-Salmon, 18; Alastair Rasente, 20; as well as a 16-year-old female. METRO

Cover your mouths

The death toll from the flu has more than doubled this year compared to last.

There have been 17 flu-related deaths this year compared to eight last year.

Over the past week, flu activity has significantly declined not only in London but also provincewide.

Officials believe a drop in vaccination rates may be a major contributor to the increase.

AM980/AM980.CA

Hominick to step into the ring backed by Ticats

Nine-year MMA veteran will be fighting for his major title in less than two weeks when he meets Jose Aldo

The Hamilton Tiger-Cats are joining forces with UFC featherweight contender Mark (The Machine) Hominick.

The 145-pound fighter from Thamesford, Ont., will wear a Ticats hat when he enters the Rogers Centre cage for UFC 129 on April 30. His fight shorts will also showcase CFL team's logo.

Hominick will also be featured at MMA Night at Ivor Wynne Stadium on July 16 when the Ticats host the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Mark 'The Machine' Hominick

"As an exciting, tough, local Canadian athlete, Mark embodies many of our organization's characteristics," Hamilton president Scott Mitchell said in a statement.

"We are glad to be in Mark's corner as he contends for the featherweight title and we know our fans in the TigerTown region will be behind him."

Hominick (20-8) is challenging Brazil's Jose Aldo for the UFC featherweight title. THE CANADIAN PRESS

World. Sledgers

▶ Adam Page, left, from the U.S. national sledge hockey team, tries to manoeuvre past Norwegian winger Rolf Pedersen during World Sledge Hockey Challenge at the Western Fair Sports Centre on Wednesday. The Americans won 4-2.

KYLE REA/METRO

Americans take the breakaway

Thursday is an off day at the sledge hockey challenge. On Friday, semifinals will take place at 12:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. The medal games are Saturday: Bronze at 10 a.m., gold at 2 p.m.

Cops reject salary increase

2.3%
The percentage city council-approved pay increase declined by the London Police Services Board.

In a letter to the city clerk, police chair Michael Deeb said: "We are mindful of the financial pressures that our city is facing, and while board member stipends represent only a small portion of a large municipal budget, we wish to do our part to keep expenses at reasonable and responsible levels." METRO

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Iggy winning more hearts

Liberal leader tied with PM in popularity stakes

JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Gaining popularity: Michael Ignatieff and wife Zsuzsanna Zsohar board their campaign plane in Toronto on Wednesday.

Nuts and bolts

- **The trend:** The survey suggests Michael Ignatieff has seen his popularity spike recently while Stephen Harper's has fallen.
- **The figures:** Ignatieff was viewed favourably by 42 per cent of respondents and negatively by 50 per cent. Harper was viewed favourably by 43 per cent and unfavourably by 52 per cent.
- **The statistics:** The poll of 1,000 Canadians, conducted between April 14 and April 17, is considered accurate to within 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Election 2011

A new poll suggests Michael Ignatieff has made significant gains in personal popularity and is now tied with Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

The Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey suggests the Liberal leader has regained the ratings he held in 2009.

However, Jack Layton, leader of the popularity contest, was viewed favourably by 68 per cent of respondents — and unfavourably by 26 per cent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Strategic-vote fans have a strategy — social media

The strategic-vote advocates are at it again.

They're armed with social media and intriguing, interactive websites.

As is often the custom mid-way through election campaigns, some who cringe at the thought of the incumbent party winning are trying to pool votes to sway the results.

It has never worked on a large scale in Canada and its detractors warn that strategic voting could actually do more harm than good.

Nonetheless, the advocates say strategic voting can indeed work in some elections and their anti-Conservative campaigns are gaining momentum.

Project Democracy says it has registered 900,000 page views since it launched its website a week ago.

Gary Shaul's group, Catch 22, has raised $15,000 and is about to launch a low-key advertising and flyer campaign.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

SOMETIMES CANADIANS ARE JUST TOO POLITE FOR THEIR OWN GOOD

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Cleaner says work at PM's residence led to cash under the table

- Bulle immigrated to Canada a decade ago and has four children
- Claims she was handed cash payments for cleaning 24 Sussex Drive

THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Zahra Bulle, a janitorial worker, says she was paid under the table for her work cleaning the prime minister's residence.

A Somali-Canadian single mother who said she was paid under the table to clean the prime minister's residence skipped a news conference Wednesday where she was set to air her complaints.

Zahra Bulle spoke to The Canadian Press the evening before, describing how she had done janitorial work inside 24 Sussex Drive last year. She said she was paid in cash by a contracting company and felt uncomfortable about it.

The organizers of the event, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), said Bulle got cold feet after receiving a late-night call from her employer.

They are still moving ahead with a legal complaint based on allegations Bulle and other workers were threatened with dismissal if they tried to organize.

They are filing complaints with the Ontario Labour Relations Board and the federal Labour Department.

"I'm urging the government to protect workers like me in their government buildings," Bulle said in a written statement read out at the news conference.

The company in question, Cleanmatters Janitorial Services Inc., operates in several government buildings across the city.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Higher. Find

▶ A bronze statue of Louis-Marie Grignion de Montfort, a French saint who founded the religious community of Nicolet, Que., is seen in a handout photo. The statue was stolen and later recovered at a metal recycling plant.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Saintly statue located

Quebec provincial police say a six-foot tall, 1,000-pound statue stolen earlier this week was found between Montreal and Quebec City. Bandits made off with the 85-year-old monument sometime Tuesday.

Mom given 12 years for suffocating toddler

A Manitoba mother who suffocated her young daughter while the two were staying at a women's shelter has been sentenced to 12 years behind bars.

Nicole Redhead, who as a child witnessed her mother kill her father, had pleaded guilty to manslaughter last year.

Redhead, 29, had her three children taken away by Child and Family Services but regained custody of her toddler, Jaylene, in 2009. Court heard how Redhead was in a woman's shelter that summer when she became violent with the crying two-year-old.

She held her hand over her daughter's mouth until the youngster stopped breathing and did not call for help. During the autopsy, medical examiners found 30 separate bruises over the child's body including some that had not yet risen to the surface.

Chief Justice Glenn Joyal said the 20-month-old's death was the culmination of "gruesome abuse."

"Having already caused the injuries that gave rise to what I was told reasonably would have been cries of pain by the deceased, the accused then placed her hand over the deceased's mouth for between 70 seconds and two minutes," Joyal said in his decision. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Haunting past

- **Judge acknowledged** Redhead's own "horrific family background," which included witnessing her father's murder at age nine at the hands of her mother in a "drunken rage."
- **She suffered abuse** as a preteen and eventually became addicted to crack cocaine and earning a living as a prostitute.
- **As a child she was** bounced around between five foster homes.
- **Defence lawyer** says an appeal of court decision is being considered.

Western politicians talk shop

The premiers of Canada's three westernmost provinces are in Vancouver today to talk about a year-old agreement to combine their purchasing power on everything from textbooks to health supplies.

The New West Partnership, signed last April in Regina, was made between Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall and then-B.C. premier Gordon Campbell.

Campbell has since left office, and taking his place at the meeting will be Premier Christy Clark.

The three provinces produce $500 billion in goods and services, annually.

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Gadhafi forces intensify attack on Misrata

Despite undercoming international criticism for its assault on the city, Libyan government continues France vows to step up airstrikes

CHRIS HONDROS/ GETTY IMAGES

▶ Libyan rebel fighters discuss how to dislodge ensconced government troops who are firing on them. The photograhper who shot this image was later critially injured.

Inside the besieged city of Misrata, spent rockets protrude from the pavement and fighters at roadblocks sit inside empty shipping containers outfitted with generator-powered TVs and watch Al-Jazeera reports of their war with Moammar Gadhafi.

"The number of artillery shells and mortars is truly amazing," said Abdul-Athim Salim, a geography professor at the local university. "The only break is when they are changing ammunition."

Gadhafi's forces have intensified their assault on Libya's third-largest city, firing tank shells and rockets into residential areas, according to witnesses and human rights groups. NATO commanders have admitted their airpower is limited in being able to protect civilians in a city — the core mission of the international air campaign. France vowed to step up airstrikes.

Most of the Gadhafi troops are centred to the south and west of the city of 300,000, and many of the residents who had lived in those areas fled to the northern part of the city. There were four areas of intense fighting in the city on Wednesday, and everyone seemed to know where the battle lines are.

Gadhafi's government has come under international criticism for its assault on Misrata and been accused by human rights groups of using heavy weapons, including missiles and cluster bombs — which have been banned by many countries.

Libyan officials have persistently denied the army is shelling Misrata or using cluster bombs. "We welcome any objective investigation of the actions of our army, our government and our officials," said government spokesman Moussa Ibrahim, adding the international community shouldn't listen to reports "fabricated by the rebels".

Human rights activists have said more than 260 people have been killed in Misrata, with the final toll likely higher, and many more people wounded. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Europe moves closer to entering Libyan conflict

Europe has moved closer to doing what it said it wouldn't do in Libya — jump into the bid to overthrow Moammar Gadhafi.

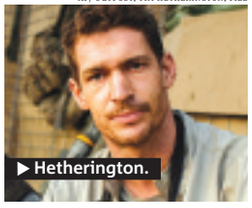
France said Wednesday it has sent military officers to work with Libyan rebels on the ground, in addition to stepping up airstrikes. Italy and Britain have said they're also sending military officers.

European officials portray their assistance as an effort to fill the military gap with Gadhafi's forces — and turn the tide without overstepping rules of the U.N.-sanctioned military operation to protect civilians.

The acting foreign minister of the National Transitional Council said the rebel movement's political wing wants more. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Photographer killed in Libya, 3 wounded

AP/ OUTPOST, TIM HETHERINGTON, FILE



▶ Hetherington.

An Oscar-nominated war photographer and film director was killed Wednesday in Misrata while covering battles between rebels and Libyan government forces. Three other Western photographers were wounded.

British-born Tim Hetherington, co-director of the documentary Restrepo about U.S. soldiers on an outpost in Afghanistan, was killed inside the only rebel-held city in western Libya, said his publicist, Johanna Ramos Boyer.

Chris Hondros, a New York-based photographer for Getty Images, was seriously injured and was on a respirator at Hikma Hospital. Doctors told The Associated Press that his condition was critical.

The two other photographers — Guy Martin and Michael Christopher Brown — were treated for shrapnel wounds, doctors said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DEMONSTRATIONS

Thousands protest in Syria

Thousands of students held demonstrations Wednesday against Syria's regime, brushing off President Bashar Assad's sweeping declarations of reform as the country's growing protest movement vowed to stage the biggest rallies to date on Friday.

The monthlong uprising in Syria has posed the biggest challenge to the 40-year ruling dynasty of President Bashar Assad and his father before him. On Tuesday, Syria did away with 50 years of emergency rule — but emboldened and defiant crowds accused Assad of simply trying to buy time.

On Wednesday, 4,000 university students from Daraa and surrounding areas protested near the city's al-Omari Mosque. Activists also said dozens of students protested Wednesday in the country's north. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gunmen open fire on Yemeni protestors

Gunmen on motorcycles sped by and opened fire on hundreds of demonstrators camped out in the early hours of the morning Wednesday in a Yemeni port city, killing one and wounding several protesters, an opposition activist said.

Radwan al-Obisi said the protesters in the Red Sea port city of Hodeida were demanding the ouster of longtime President Ali Abdullah Saleh when they were attacked by thugs hired by the ruling party.

The two months of anti-government turmoil in this impoverished nation is threatening to spiral out of control as nearly daily protests across the country are being violently suppressed by security forces.

More than 120 people have been killed since demonstrations, inspired by uprisings elsewhere in the Arab world, erupted in Yemen calling for the end of Saleh's more than three decades in power.

Like much of the country Tuesday, Hodeida saw thousands march through the streets, tearing down posters of Saleh, before they were dispersed by police. A number of cities also now feature protesters camping out in main squares. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE CANADIAN PRESS/TORONTO POLICE SERVICES

▶ Qian Liu is shown in a Toronto police handout photo. The York University student was found dead in her apartment near the school last Friday.

POLICE MAKE ARREST IN STUDENT'S DEATH

BRIAN DICKSON, 29, CHARGED WITH MURDER

Police say a man has been arrested in the death of a York University student.

Brian Dickson, 29, is charged with first-degree murder and is to appear in court Thursday morning.

Qian Liu, 23, was found on Friday in her basement apartment but an autopsy failed to show a cause of death.

Investigators have said Liu was chatting with a friend in China by webcam last Friday when an unknown man arrived at her apartment and a struggle took place.

The online witness reported the struggle lasted for several minutes before the man turned off Liu's laptop. Police say the webcam images were live-streamed and not recorded.

Liu's father arrived in Toronto from Beijing on Wednesday. He has said the person in China who witnessed the attack on the webcam was his daughter's boyfriend.

Police say it could be weeks before the results of toxicology tests are known.

Liu's death has shaken the York University community and neighbours near her apartment.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Harper clad in Buffalo plaid

Website mocking old photos of candidates expected to hit a million views ◐ Plenty of mop-top hairdos and large-frame glasses to snicker at

ELISHA DACEY
WINNIPEGLETTERS
@METRONEWS.CA

VINTAGEVOTER.CA

▶ Stephen Harper in his university days.

Bet Stephen Harper never thought a photo of himself in his university days would go viral.

Thanks to a new website, vintagevoter.ca, photos of Harper and the other national party leaders in their "glory" days are all over the Internet, Twitter and Facebook.

The site, which has published 10 photos of Harper, Elizabeth May, Michael Ignatieff, Jack Layton and Gilles Duceppe in their younger days, was created by Winnipegger David Liebl, 31, and two of his friends.

"We're, as you say, equal in who we make fun of."
DAVID LIEBL, 31, WHO FOUNDED VINTAGEVOTER.CA

"Certainly, we never expected it to be this popular," said Liebl.

Liebl said the response has been overwhelming, and vintagevoter.ca has been a trending topic on Twitter since its launch on Monday.

Liebl calls the site a satirical look at national politics, and he hopes the site will encourage people to become more engaged in the political process.

"I won't suggest that looking at the site translates into a vote at the box, but it's my hope ... that people will become more engaged and aware of Canadian politics."

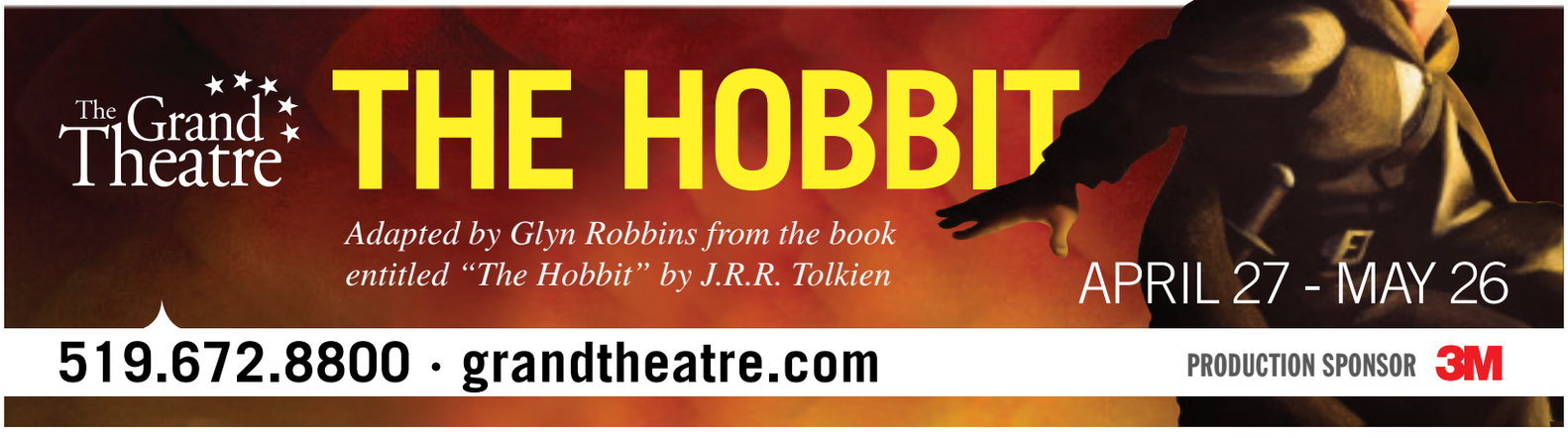
Liebl said he has had responses from at least one political party and he's hoping other camps will submit photos of their leaders in their younger days.

"We're, as you say, equal in who we make fun of," said Liebl.

Retro democracy

Vintagevoter.ca has more than 8,600 "likes" on Facebook.

▶ **1970s** A photo of Michael Ignatieff features the Liberal leader in a grey suit and green tie, "back when being a Harvard intellectual wasn't a political liability," the site says.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Canadians find it 'a struggle' to save: Survey

Repaying debt only going to get harder as spiking inflation drives interest rates up, experts say

Nearly one-third of Canadians don't have enough money to cover living expenses, while 38 per cent have no savings at all, says a survey from TD Bank.

And with interest rates expected to rise this summer, clearing debts probably won't get any easier.

"I think it's worrisome," said Carrie Russell, senior vice-president of retail banking at TD Canada Trust.

The report, released Wednesday, says 30 per cent of Canadians don't have enough money to cover rent and food bills.

The online survey is based on a representative sample of 1,003 Canadian adults and was conducted in December by Environics Research for the bank.

Busted

- **In Ontario, 54 per cent of** respondents said they found it "a struggle" or impossible to save, and 33 per cent said they didn't have enough money to cover living expenses.

The respondents said their top goals were: Saving for retirement (73 per cent), paying off credit cards (72 per cent) and major purchases or vacations (53 per cent each).

Russell said 12 per cent of those surveyed couldn't save because "they shopped beyond their means." Nineteen per cent under the age of 35 said they spent too much on shopping, she added.

"This really comes down to the age-old question of budgeting, choices and skills required in making plans for a healthy financial future."

On the flip side, 30 per cent said they had enough money saved to cover living expenses for at least four months.

She recommends a cushion of three to six months of income saved to get through unexpected financial shocks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Beer. League

▶ Canadians drank 83.6 litres of beer per person in 2010, Statistics Canada reports.

JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rhapsody in brew

Canadians drank $9.2 billion worth of beer — or 83.6 litres per person — in 2010, up 3.8 per cent from the previous year, Statistics Canada reports. But while beer remains the country's favourite alcoholic thirst-quencher, its market share has in fact declined to 46 per cent from 52 per cent a decade ago. Meanwhile, wine consumption continues to grow, with share for wine rising to 29 per cent last year from 23 per cent in 2009.

Funny money takes bank aback

A panic ensued in Harare on Wednesday after an automated teller machine dished out defunct Zimbabwe dollars while it was being repaired.

Witnesses said irate bank customers thronged the Interfin bank in downtown Harare as rumours spread that the old currency was back in circulation.

Zimbabwe abandoned its own currency in 2009 and adopted the U.S. dollar in an attempt to halt record inflation and end the use of huge denominations of local bills in millions, billions and trillions during the nation's decade-long economic meltdown.

The Interfin bank said Wednesday that the error occurred when technicians tested the ATM with the old currency and forgot to take it out of the machine.

The bank took back the local bills and apologized.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

China surges ahead with switch to electric cars

The toylike electric cars at the Shanghai International Auto Show are a glimpse of the high-tech automotive future China's leaders are pursuing — and a harbinger of possible disputes with its trading partners.

Beijing sees electric cars as a field where it can take a global lead and use its fast-growing market as leverage to develop its own technology and global brands. But while it pushes its fledgling automakers to create their own products, it also has alarmed global producers that operate in China by pressing them to hand over know-how and limiting access to its market.

Draft investment rules issued last month would allow foreigners to own only a minority stake in Chinese manufacturers of electric car components. Next month, Beijing is due to release a 10-year industry development plan for "new energy vehicles," and automakers worry it will impose further curbs on production or imports.

Foreign manufacturers are concerned Beijing might require them to hand over valuable technology and help local partners create "indigenous brands" as the price of being allowed to sell electric cars in China.

Beijing already requires that for a foreign manufacturer to produce an electric car in China, its local joint venture must own the technology for one of the three "core components" — the battery, the motor or the power-management system.

Developing powerful but safe batteries has been a key challenge for Chinese automakers. Batteries in Chinese cars have exploded more than 10 times during development.

China passed the United States in 2009 in number of vehicles sold annually and foreign producers are looking to China to drive sales, putting them under pressure to co-operate.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EUGENE HOSHIKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Presenters set an electric moped into the back of Geely's "McCar" at the Shanghai International Auto Show. The concept car and others like it could bring trade troubles.

Loonie flies higher

The Canadian dollar was positive Wednesday against a much weaker American currency.

The loonie was off early highs, up 0.4 of a cent to 104.9 cents US after earlier hitting 105.29 cents US, its highest level since November 2007.

The weakening of the U.S. dollar came two days after Standard & Poor's said the U.S.'s credit rating had a one-in-three chance of being downgraded given the state of public finances and worries that policy-makers won't be able to come up with a deficit reduction plan.

In the currency markets, the dollar has given up all the gains it made in the aftermath of the S&P warning, when it benefited from its status as a safe haven.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Visit clubmetro.com and enter the code that is beside the hobbit for your chance to WIN!

China Telecom expands

China Telecom Ltd. is upgrading its presence in Canada, making its Markham, Ont., office into a full-fledged subsidiary to serve multinational companies and international telecom carriers.

Donald Tan, president of China Telecom Americas, said the company has had an office in Canada for more than five years but demand for communication links with China and the Asia-Pacific region has increased.

The group's parent company, China Telecom, has the world's largest fixed-line telecommunications network. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Food fight dishing up great deals

Metro and other chains wage war against Walmart with deep discounts

Some food prices are rising but consumers continue to see great deals as retailers fight to compete with Walmart, the head of Metro Inc. said Wednesday.

"Promotional prices are very, very aggressive because of the competitive situation," president and CEO Eric La Fleche said.

Walmart is responsible for most of the added grocery-store square footage in Quebec and Ontario, while Sobeys rebranded its Price Chopper discount chain to FreshCo. in Canada's largest province.

Competition is expected to accelerate in Quebec when the world's largest retailer begins selling groceries at Walmart Supercentres, as the U.S. retail giant does in other markets including Ontario.

La Fleche said the deals will continue for now, "but at some point, some of those promotional prices could perhaps increase.

"Consumers will dictate what we can do and we intend to remain very price competitive."

Metro is Quebec's leading grocery chain with nearly 34 per cent market share. It operates a network of close to 600 food stores and has more than 65,000 employees in Quebec and Ontario. THE CANADIAN PRESS

RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Metro has a strong presence in Quebec, with dozens of newly renovated stores like this one in Laval.

Hyundai debuts new marketing campaign

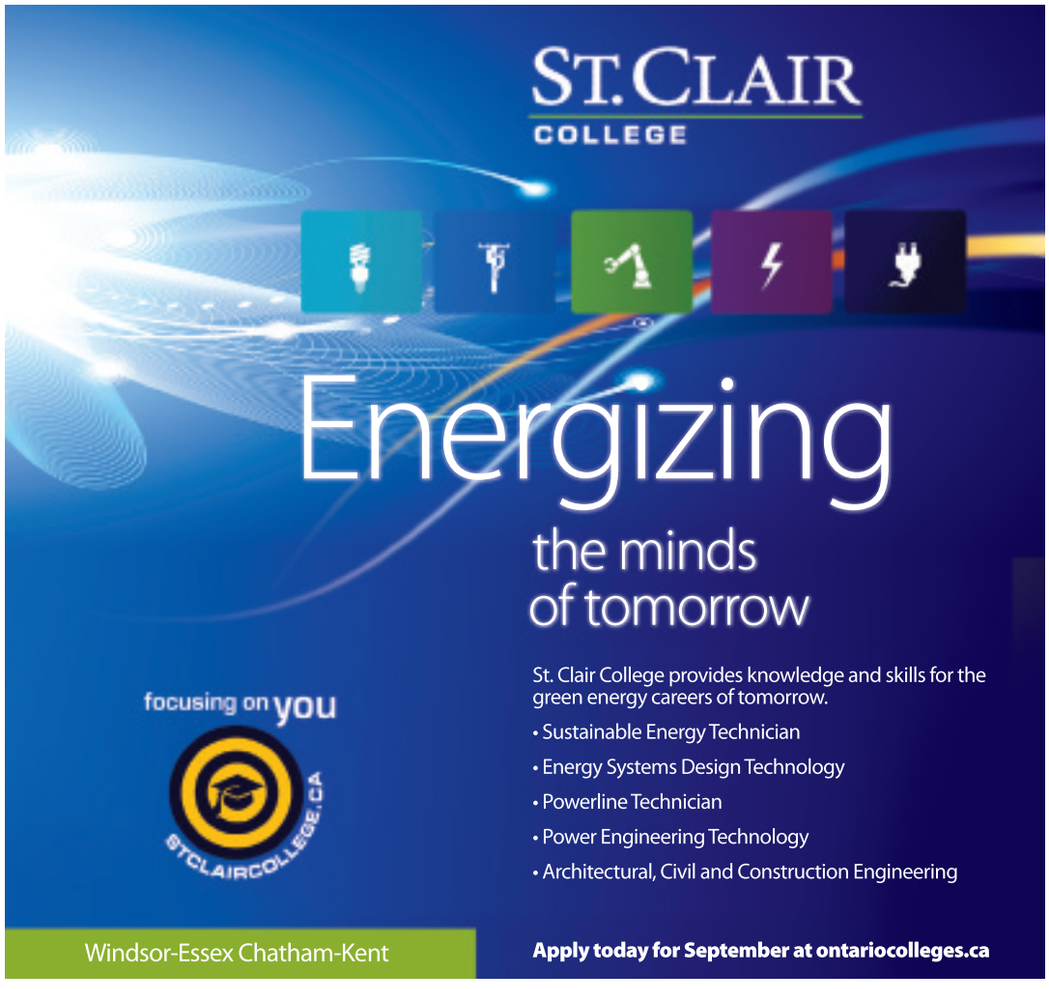
Hyundai Motor Co. will guarantee the trade-in price of new cars sold in the U.S. starting May 1, the company said Wednesday.

The offer is the most recent in a series of innovative marketing initiatives from the automaker, which recently ended a program that promised to buy back buyers' cars if they lost their jobs.

Analysts say the new offer is the first time an automaker has made such a guarantee. While the program probably won't cost Hyundai much, it will likely increase the number of return customers, since buyers can apply the trade-in value only to a new Hyundai.

"It's a bold move for Hyundai. It's a minimal cost to them, but it creates a lot of buzz," said Jesse Toprak, vice-president of industry trends and analysis at TrueCar.com.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Gilded pay packet for Google ex-boss

Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt got a huge raise after he gave up the top job to take on a new role at the company.

Google Inc. boosted Schmidt's annual salary from one dollar to $1.25 million US on April 4 when he turned the CEO job over to co-founder Larry Page.

Schmidt is focusing on acquisitions and government relations as Google's executive chairman.

The revised compensation package will pay him an annual bonus of up to $6 million US.

Schmidt has an estimated net worth of $7 billion US. He had limited his salary to one dollar and refused bonuses since 2004 despite the company's offer to pay him more each year.

Page and Google's other co-founder, Sergey Brin, are still limiting their salaries to one dollar.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Success is the best revenge for Taco Bell

Taco Bell took a parting shot Wednesday at the law firm that filed a class-action suit over the filling of its tacos and burritos.

In full-page newspaper advertisements, the company asks in big bold type: "Would it kill you to say you're sorry?"

The chain ran the ads in publications across the United States, including in Alabama, home of law firm Beasley Allen, which launched the suit. The ads amount to a victory lap by Taco Bell after the firm dropped the action this week.

Beasley Allen filed the false-advertising suit in California in January, alleging the chain's meat mixture contained binders and extenders and did not have enough beef to be called that. It said it dropped the lawsuit after Taco Bell made changes to its marketing and product disclosure.

Not so, the chain insists. In its ads, Taco Bell says it made no changes to its products, ingredients or advertising, no money was exchanged and there was no settlement agreement as a result of the suit being dropped.

The law firm had no immediate comment.

In the ads, Taco Bell gets in a final dig at the lawyers who brought the ill-fated suit — "You got it wrong, and you're probably feeling pretty bad right about now. But you know what always helps? Saying to everyone, 'I'm sorry.' C'mon, you can do it!" THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's a wrap

- **Taco Bell says its taco** filling contains 88 per cent USDA-inspected beef and the rest is water, spices and a mixture of oats, starch and other ingredients that contribute to what it calls "the quality of its product." It says it uses no extenders to add volume to the filling.
- **The fast-food chain has** almost 5,600 U.S. restaurants. It is owned by Yum Brands Inc., based in Louisville, Ky., which is also the parent of Pizza Hut and KFC. Taco Bell accounts for about 60 per cent of Yum's profits in the U.S.

He says ...

JOHN MAZEROLLE

WHAT WILL THE PUNDITS SAY?

Whether you're new to the country, new to voting, or just an ignouramous (note the Canadian spelling), you may be confused by some of the lingo you've been hearing since the "writ" was "dropped" in our "democracy." If that sounds like you, then here's a special glossary to bring you meaning as you decide who is the lesser of five evils.

CANADA VOTES 2011 GLOSSARY

Advance poll: A place where Canadians who are unable to cast ballots on voting day exercise their right to avoid voting in advance.

Coalition: Traditionally a temporary alliance of political parties used to form a government when no single party can do so. More recently understood to be the worst, most reckless, most despicable action a party can take short of mailing people flesh-eating disease.

Democracy: A form of government designed to give the maximum number of people in society the impression that what they think matters. In Canada, usually accompanied by a question mark. (Google it and see.)

Gerrymander: To divide electoral ridings in a way that favours one party over another; for example, if the Conservative government created a riding that included only affluent suburbs, or if Elizabeth May created a riding that included only her house.

Husting: Any place where a candidate meets voters; originally contained an L.

Independent: A candidate so true to his or her own ideals and personal vision for Canada that he or she has no chance of winning.

Poll: A survey that indicates the voting intentions of people who still have landlines and are so lonely that they're just happy to have someone to talk to, 19 times out of 20.

Pundit: A political commentator who forms opinions by commenting on the opinions of other pundits. The identity of The Original Pundit is a closely guarded secret.

Green party: The Glossary Consortium has ruled that the Green party will not get its own definition until it has a seat in the House of Commons.

Bloc Québécois: A political party that blames the federal government for everything bad and takes credit for everything good, making it the party that most closely resembles the average Canadian.

New Democratic Party: The political party that will hold the balance of power in the House of Commons for the foreseeable future through the power of fourth-place finishes.

Grits: (slang) Southern corn-based food or the Liberal Party of Canada; traditionally goes with pork.

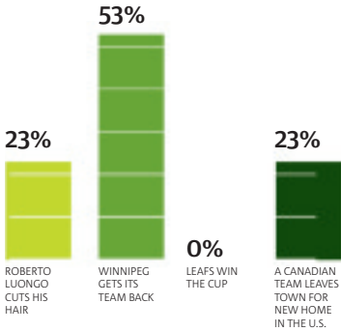
Conservative party: (Definition redacted).

Read more of John Mazerolle's columns at metronews.ca/hesays

metro life panel

Register at metrolifepanel.ca and take the quick poll

What will happen first in the NHL?



Local tweets

- **@FCSurplus:** Cool new robotic dinosaurs now in stock. Build your own T-Rex and watch it come to life http://bit.ly/gS87ZC #ldnont #toys #dinosaurs #kids
- **@HeritageCouncil:** A great video for a great piece. Watch him transform a 960-sq ft wall into art! #LDNont http://ow.ly/4E93t (via @MuseumLondon)
- **@FM96Blair:** It's #420 today. If you can remember, then head down to #LdnOnt's Vic Park for the festivities. That's IF you remember.
- **@MegRadford:** Good morning #ldnont! Let's have some sunshine, shall we?
- **@saniyaj:** migraines and exams = worst possible combination out there #ugh #uwo
- **@dmrodrigues89:** it's a good thing I'm not that invested into my hair today. this rain is putting a damper on things ... lol
- **@sohaes:** Happy 420, kids. See you in the candy aisle!
- **@ktotheb:** Prepping for my raw vegan dessert class tomorrow night. Hope to see you there. http://bit.ly/h7mimW

Worth mentioning

TORONTO. Children's entertainer and activist Raffi is urging "Beluga grads" to vote in the federal election.

The beloved singer-songwriter, author and founder of the Centre for Child Honouring makes the plea in a new video posted on YouTube.

In the piece, entitled Raffi 4 Canada, the 62-year-old tells "Beluga grads" that if they're really passionate about Canada like he is, they will want to vote May 2.

He also outlines his hopes for the future of the country, saying he thinks Canada needs to strengthen its democratic traditions and enhance them.

Raffi closes out the video by singing a new election-themed verse to his hit 1980 children's tune, Baby Beluga.

"Now you've grown and you're on your way, making waves in the boundless bay, with your shining light and your dreams alive, for the young you'll have one day," he croons.

"Grown up Beluga, grown up Beluga, come and rock the vote, please get out and vote, we need to hear you."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cartoon by Michael De Adder

WEIRD NEWS

Get cracking to eggs-traordinary tree in Germany

Volker Kraft's apple sapling sported just 18 eggs when he first decorated it for Easter in 1965. Decades later, the sturdy tree is festooned with 9,800 eggs, artfully decorated with everything from sequins to seashells.

Decking trees with hollowed-out, painted eggs for Easter is popular in Germany, but the 75-year-old retiree's annual creation has become something special in Saalfeld. Last year, it drew more than 13,000 visitors.

▶ Volker Kraft's tree

Kraft needs two weeks and countless trips up and down his ladder to hang the eggs and the task has become a little heavier each year since he began the decorations in 1965.

Kraft plans to add another 200 eggs next year, bringing his total to 10,000 — and then stop, if only because he is running out of room to store the mountain of boxes.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

metro

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OUR PLANET EARTH

FEATURED INSIDE:

THE WONDERS OF OUR WORLD – AT HOME AND ABROAD

NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CANADA POWERED BY TOSHIBA TECHNOLOGY

WWF & LOBLAW TEAM UP TO BRING GREENERY TO SCHOOLS

HOW DOES RECYCLING WORK?

THE FIRST STEP IN A LONG JOURNEY

Earth Hour began this year where it always begins — on the east coast of Australia. For the next 24 hours it moved steadily through time zones around the world as millions of people switched off their lights, appliances and television sets for one symbolic hour. Around the world familiar landmarks faded to dark — Big Ben, the Eiffel Tower, the Brandenburg Gate, the Parthenon, Forbidden City and Mount Rushmore. In the Philippines a few television stations even halted their broadcasts. Organizers are still tallying the numbers, but Earth Hour 2010 was already counted as the biggest on record, with more than a billion people taking part.

Jed Goldberg admits that events like Earth Hour don't really benefit the environment in any appreciable way, but he says they are powerful symbols nevertheless. Goldberg is the president of Earth Day Canada, an organization that coordinates Earth Day events, promotes year-round programs and educates Canadians on environmental issues. "The fact that so many millions of people around the world take part in these events shows that there is an environmental consciousness out there that didn't exist 20 years ago," he says. "It's very encouraging."

In fact you have to go back 40 years to truly gauge the progress of the environmental movement. The first Earth Day took place in the United States in 1970, in the era of the Kent State Massacre and campus sit-ins. Environmentalists like Rachael Carson, Jacques Cousteau and Jane Goodall were starting to become household names, while an iconic photograph of a fragile planet Earth on a background of black nothingness — an image taken by Apollo astronauts on the way to the moon — captured humanity's imagination. "Earth Day was supposed to be a one-day wonder," says Goldberg. "Another excuse for a college sit-in. But it touched a nerve, and 20 million Americans took part."

That's a small number, in retrospect. Last year 90 million Americans switched off their lights for Earth Hour, and many more millions took part in Earth Day and Earth Month activities around the world. But is the movement really having an appreciable affect on the environment? Goldberg says yes. "Today environmental awareness is part of our culture here in Canada," he says. "It's part of our daily routine. Twenty years ago a lot of people didn't even know what composting was. Nowadays a lot of urban Canadians have composters in their back yards. Recycling programs are ubiquitous and there's a real awareness of things like organic food and energy saving."

In fact, studies show in just the first four years of the last decade, composting increased the amount of organic waste diverted from Canadian landfills by 70 percent. Recycling has also increased by nearly 10 percent since 2006, decreasing the amount of waste coming from Canadian households by about 4 percent. But carbon emissions in Canada are increasing faster than the population, and recent events like the nuclear reactor crisis in Japan and last year's oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico point to the fact that much more needs to be done. "We've just scratched the surface," says Goldberg. "Shifting our environmental sensibilities is just the first step, but it's an important step."

– Tom Mason

METRO CUSTOM PUBLISHING
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TOSHIBA'S GREEN MACHINES

Pelee Island

TOSHIBA OF CANADA

Toshiba Canada's support for the new Land Information System includes laptop computers, adapted for multiple uses, both in-field and in-office

IT'S A CHANGING WORLD. THOSE WHO THRIVE DIVERSIFY, AND CONSERVE THEIR RESOURCES WHERE THEY CAN.

You hear this sort of talk a lot in business, but these principles are bigger than profits and losses. They describe the state of our planet, too. Companies like Toshiba of Canada make it their business to see the connection.

For Toshiba, the merging of corporate and social responsibility goes deep; and it's getting deeper still, with the announcement of Toshiba's alliance with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). This three-year partnership will support the two organizations' shared core belief: that conservation of the biodiversity of ecosystems is the key to environmental management.

"We believe NCC is providing a great benefit to Canadians," says Ralph Hyatt, Toshiba Canada's president and CEO. The private, non-profit group partners with corporate and individual landowners to conserve some of Canada's most precious, and imperiled, natural spaces, and the plant and animal life inhabiting them. They protect the wild, yet their methods are anything but low-tech. That's where Toshiba comes in.

Toshiba is the largest private sector supporter of NCC's Land Information System (LIS). Developed by NCC science staff, the LIS will roll out Canada-wide this year, allowing NCC to report on its achievements in an integrated way, using categories such as Species, Threats, and Stewardship Actions, and ultimately helping it make the strategic decisions necessary to better protect Canadian land and species.

Over the next three years, Toshiba will support LIS with funding and mobile computing technology in the form of laptop computers, adapted for multiple uses, including training, in-office and in-field conservation work, and stewardship management. Using Toshiba technology and LIS, NCC staff will report, plan, manage and monitor properties more efficiently, resulting in better time and resources management, and better conservation overall.

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

On one side: a high-tech company with a social ethic, looking for a worthy cause. On the other: a charity helping to preserve the planet, but sorting through mountains of data. Toshiba of Canada and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) belong together, because each offers the other what it needs.

NCC is an organization dedicated to protecting highly threatened landscapes—those vital to Canada's ecological integrity. It's an efficient organization by any measure, keeping overhead costs at 15 per cent, including administration, fundraising, and communication. However, it also requires the help of more than 200 staff and volunteers to collect, store and analyze the enormous amounts of information needed to plan its activities. To keep things running smoothly, and with Toshiba's support, NCC has developed a Land Information System (LIS).

"The LIS allows our experts to access critical information instantly, in the field or the office," explains NCC president and CEO, John Lounds. "Through our partnership with Toshiba, we can integrate powerful technology into that conservation work." And the arrangement does more than save time for NCC staffers; it will also improve conservation outcomes and strengthen NCC's bonds with outside partners, like landowners.

"Toshiba's contribution allows us to better share information that impacts our conservation efforts," says Lynn Gran, NCC's vice-president, strategic philanthropy, and CDO. "That's how you create true win-win outcomes. With Toshiba's support, we're building a system that helps us conserve more landscapes, protect more species, and create a natural legacy for generations of Canadians."

With Earth Day on the way, NCC and Toshiba expect conservation to be top-of-mind for many more Canadians. Those ready to help protect habitats and species can learn how at www.natureconservancy.ca/forcefornature.

American Avocet

ALLISON HASKELL

ENERGY STAR HONOURS TOSHIBA CANADA

Conservation is its own reward, but a little recognition never hurts, either. Toshiba Canada is proud to be named 'Recruit of the Year' at the 2010 Energy Star Market Transformation Awards, acknowledging the company's efforts to market energy efficient products to Canadians.

Today, all of Toshiba's notebooks and LED TVs bear the Energy Star symbol, meaning they reduce energy consumption and costs by 10 to 65 percent over conventional models. Toshiba continues to use the symbol extensively on packaging of qualified products and has developed environmental specification sheets to better educate consumers about them.

The awards are presented annually by the Government of Canada.

OUR PLANET EARTH

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Disney nature
TOSHIBA Leading Innovation >>>
WWF
Loblaw

Leading innovation leads to a better world.

When it comes to building our award-winning products, we believe less is more. So we minimize waste and use recycled materials wherever we can, while constantly looking for ways to reduce energy consumption. Recycling programs keep discarded technology from fouling the soil and atmosphere, as does our devotion to worldwide environmental initiatives. Plus, we check to see that the people who make the materials that go into our products follow earth-friendly practices just as we do so we can all enjoy the latest technologies amid a cleaner, more sustainable world.

Toshiba.ca/environment

TOSHIBA
Leading Innovation >>>

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The Galapagos Islands were integral to the science of natural history and are one of the the premier ecotourism destinations on the planet.

COURTESY OF GAP ADVENTURES ©ATTIT PATEL

ECOTOURISM ADVENTURES

UNIQUE DESTINATIONS OFFER LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCES

Danny Gilfoy and Michael Waugh were just trying to escape a bleak Nova Scotia winter when they headed for Costa Rica this past February. They ended up escaping the confines of human civilization for two incredible weeks. Costa Rica was a magical place full of natural wonders that the two Halifax natives had never seen before. They hired guides to take them through mangrove swamps teaming with crocodiles, visited beaches where leatherback turtle conservation projects were underway and a rehabilitation centre that returned injured howler monkeys to the wild. They tried their hand at white water rafting and canyoning and rode long zip lines through rainforest canopies. In the quiet evenings they thrilled to the sloths and coatimundis that crept curiously close their rented cabin.

When nothing else was planned, Gilfoy and Waugh hiked the trails that honeycombed through the rain forests and cloud forests near their accommodations — well marked and maintained to keep hikers from trampling the delicate ecosystem and a safe distance away from venomous snakes and insects. "If you have a good guide with you, they will spot things that you wouldn't notice," says Gilfoy. "They'll explain a lot about the ecology of the place that you would otherwise miss."

Gilfoy and Waugh are part of a new travel mindset, says Bruce Poon Tip, founder of the Toronto-based adventure travel company Gap Adventures. They are eco-tourists. "Eco-tourists are individuals who want to learn something on their holiday and experience a new culture," he says. "They want a little more than a week on the beach or a boring coach tour."

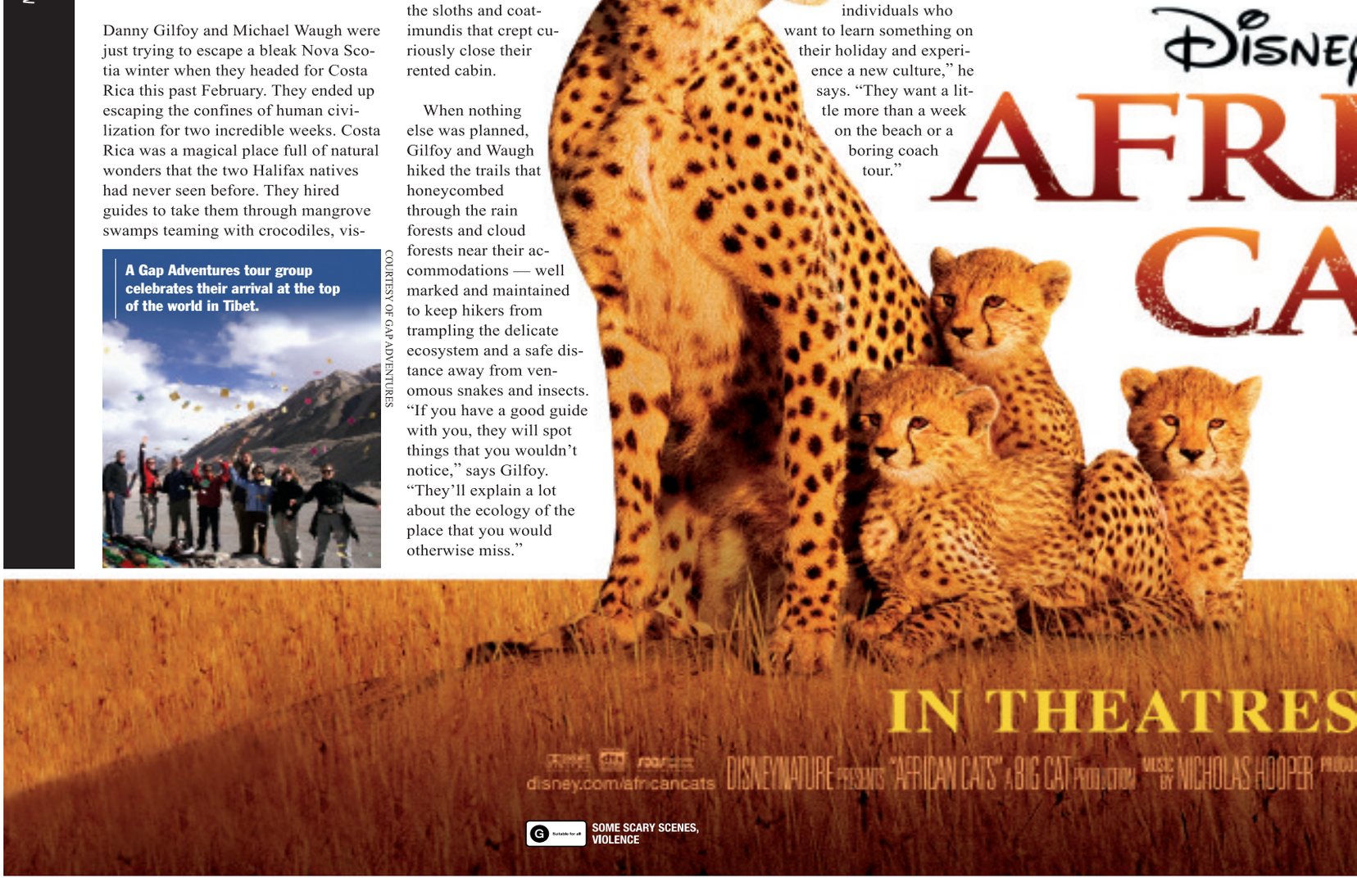
A Gap Adventures tour group celebrates their arrival at the top of the world in Tibet.

COURTESY OF GAP ADVENTURES

Poon Tip started Gap Adventures in 1990 as an alternative for traditional forms of travel like cruise ships, resorts and coach tours. Today his company offers more than 1,300 trips to over 100 countries — many to exotic destinations like the Galapagos Islands, Antarctica or Tibet – places with wildlife or spiritual highlights that often create life-changing experiences for his clients. "I believed travel, more specifically innovative travel experiences, was a powerful force that could facilitate change, and ultimately change people's lives."

Gilfoy says the Costa Rica experience was definitely a life-changer, and he recommends that anyone who wants to get the most out of an ecotourism adventure should hire a reputable travel company to handle the details. "The company that we used picked us up at the airport and drove us back. For two weeks they arranged everything, based on what we told them we wanted to do. We didn't have to worry about a thing."

It is still a vacation, after all.

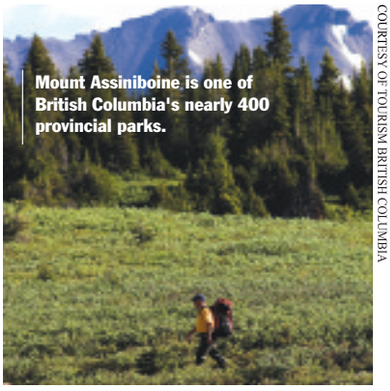


CANADIAN NATURAL WONDERS

The Bay of Fundy between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is a Mecca for sea kayakers, rockhounds, whale watchers and outdoor lovers.

COURTESY OF NOVA SCOTIA ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

The Haliburton Forest Tour is one of the most unique hiking experiences in a country awash with great hiking trails. The four-hour guided hike starts along the bank of a scenic river near the Ontario town of Haliburton, then ascends 20 meters into the top of the forest canopy via a suspended boardwalk. It's an aspect of the Canadian forest that most Ontarians have never seen, despite the fact that the Haliburton Forest lies just a few hours drive from cities like Toronto, Ottawa and London.



Mount Assiniboine is one of British Columbia's nearly 400 provincial parks.

COURTESY OF TOURISM BRITISH COLUMBIA

It's a fact that many Canadian city dwellers seem unaware of. No matter where you live in this country, it's possible to spend the day immersed in the natural world and still be home in time for dinner.

The natural drama is everywhere. In Nova Scotia every September millions of plovers and sandpipers gather along a thin strip of beach in the Bay of Fundy, blanketing the mud flats and gorging themselves on shrimp, preparing for a nonstop migratory flight to South America. At the Saguenay-Saint-Laurent Marine Park where the Saguenay River meets the Saint Lawrence, 13 species of whales can be seen in one place as they feed in the rich waters. At Point Pelee National Park in the southern tip of Ontario, keen observers can spot almost 400 species of birds and a variety of plants that aren't found anywhere else in Canada.

Western city dwellers are even closer to nature. Winnipeg sits at the edge of three major Canadian ecosystems — the tallgrass prairie to the west and south, the Canadian shield to the east and the interlake region to the north. In Calgary and Edmonton, an hour's drive west puts day trip adventurers into the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The same distance east opens up the harsh, beautiful world of the badlands. And British Columbia, with five spectacular national parks and nearly 400 provincial parks, is one of the great ecotourism destinations on the planet.

Taken together it represents a lifetime of exploring for Canadian urbanites. One day trip at a time.

-Tom Mason

CANADIAN ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS WITHIN EASY REACH

BAY OF FUNDY: Currently on the short list of choices for the "seven wonders of the natural world" the Bay of Fundy between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is a mecca for whale and bird watchers, fossil hunters, kayakers and photographers.

ALGONQUIN PARK: The oldest provincial park in Canada is also one of the country's finest. Within easy reach from Ottawa, Algonquin Park is a chance to see big game wildlife in its natural state, and follow in the footsteps of the Group of Seven.

CAP TOURMENTE NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREA: Just a short drive north of Quebec City in Quebec's spectacular Charlevoix region, Cap Tourmente is a major snow goose migration stopover and an internationally recognized tidal marsh wetland.

MANTARIO TRAIL: Located about 150 kilometers east of Winnipeg, the 63-kilometer-long Mantario Trail in Whiteshell Provincial Park is not for the ill-prepared, but it's a good place to experience the natural wonders along the edge of the Canadian shield.

MALIGNE CANYON: One of the most dramatic hikes in Alberta's Jasper National Park, Maligne Canyon is a deep canyon complete with waterfalls, glacier carved caverns and spectacular gorges.

JOHNSTON CANYON: An easy drive from Calgary, Johnston Canyon in Banff National Park offers hikers a chance to see as many as seven waterfalls, depending on how much energy they want to exert.

SEA KAYAKING IN HOWE SOUND: With practically a lifetime of natural getaways within easy reach of downtown Vancouver, it's hard to know where to start. A guided sea kayaking tour of Howe Sound is one option — complete with epic mountain scenery, seabirds and possible orca sightings. A number of local outfitters offer rentals, instructions and qualified guides for novice paddlers.

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LITTLE GREEN THUMBS

HOW SMALL INVESTMENTS IN OUR PLANET CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

"It's about using the five senses," says Anna Hill, "getting outside and getting their hands dirty." Hill is referring to the Givens-Shaw Sowers and Growers Club for students in Grades 1 to 3 in downtown Toronto that she co-founded with teacher Kim McIntyre.

Sitting in McIntyre's sun-filled classroom at Givins-Shaw Junior Public School, Hill and McIntyre recount the importance of bridging the gap between the school's students and the natural world. "I love growing things," says McIntyre, "and I thought kids would be interested in a gardening club. I never expected to see 60 kids join up."

Thanks in part to a Green CommUnity Grant from WWF, supported by Loblaw through its plastic-bag charge, the Sowers and Growers Club is starting its first major project. The children are turning an unused patch of land at the school into a beautiful garden for native plants and butterflies. A series of cedar beds will become a herb garden, a salad-and-greens patch and two "soup" gardens.

"The leadership we are seeing from students and schools in taking action for our planet is truly inspiring," says WWF's VP of Fundraising, Christina Topp. "It's amazing to think that this is made possible through the Loblaw plastic-bag charge."

The five-cent charge is meant to reduce the number of plastic bags used by Canadians. The company has already seen a 73% reduction in plastic-bag production. But Loblaw doesn't stop there. Through corporate donations and partial proceeds from the plastic-bag charge, Loblaw funds WWF efforts to inspire simple, everyday actions that add up to a big environmental impact.

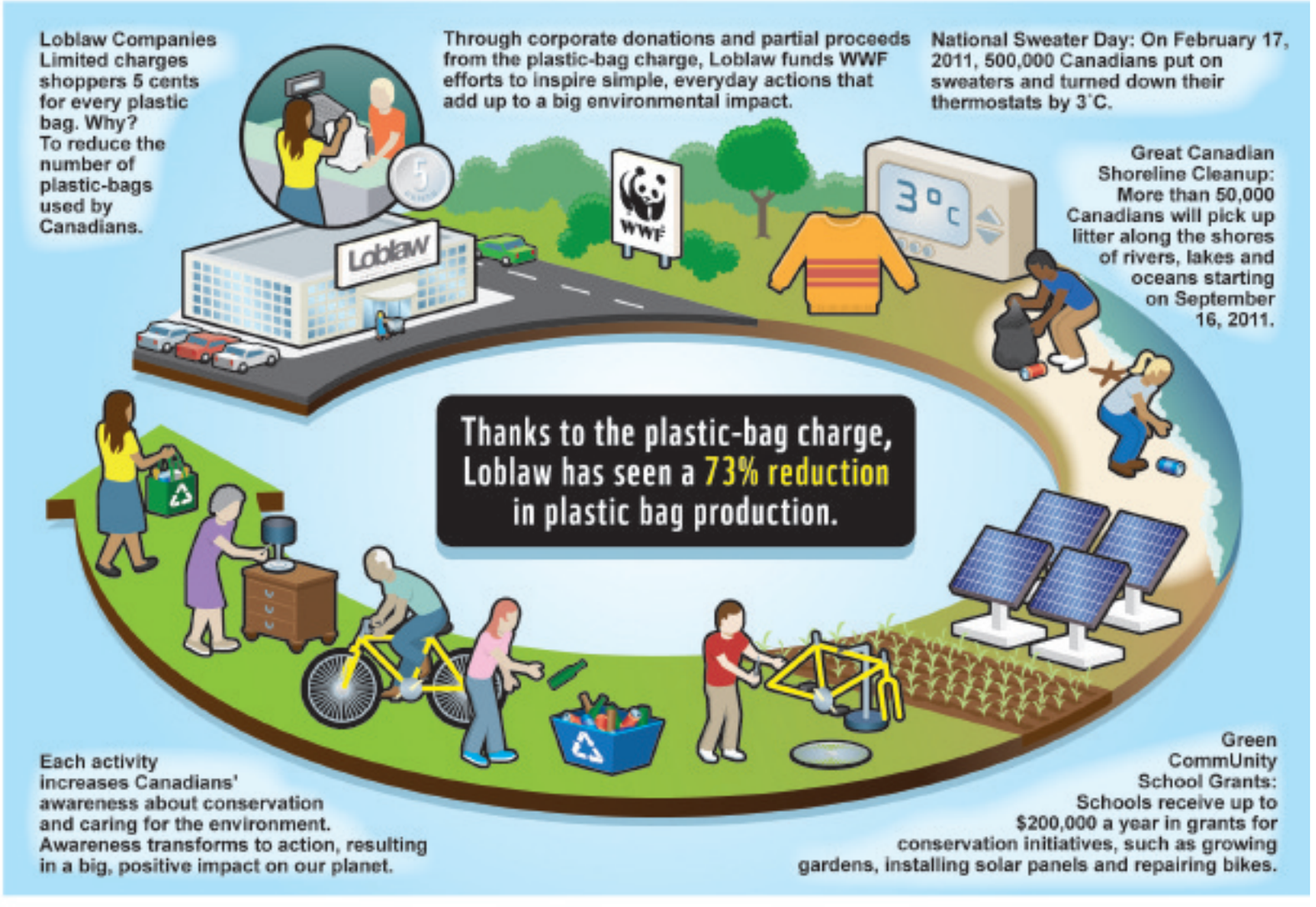
Along with the Green CommUnity School Grants, these efforts include National Sweater Day in February, when more than 500,000 Canadians put on sweaters and turned down their thermostats, and the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, which involves more than 50,000 Canadians picking up litter along our shores in September.

"These three programs help Canadians understand how they can help sustain our environment," says Topp. "And the Givins-Shaw project is a wonderful example of how these vital lessons are passed on from one generation to the next."

Hill couldn't agree more. She is both an engaged parent at Givins-Shaw and a volunteer coordinator of the greenhouse in nearby Trinity Bellwoods Park. She points to the launch of a farmers' market in the park as a catalyst for the club. "It was an opportunity to learn about the importance of a local food economy. We wanted to show the kids that, just like those farmers, they could grow their own vegetables, and we could use the greenhouse to start from seeds."

At this moment, the seeds are germinating a short walk from the school at the greenhouse. The club is divided into two groups of 30. Groups of eager children alternate once a week, tending to their plants and monitoring their progress. Their enthusiasm is contagious. "When can we eat this?" wonders one student, Alice. "I'm hungry!"

Small actions can make a big impact


Loblaw Companies Limited charges shoppers 5 cents for every plastic bag. Why? To reduce the number of plastic-bags used by Canadians.
Through corporate donations and partial proceeds from the plastic-bag charge, Loblaw funds WWF efforts to inspire simple, everyday actions that add up to a big environmental impact.
National Sweater Day: On February 17, 2011, 500,000 Canadians put on sweaters and turned down their thermostats by 3˚C.
Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup: More than 50,000 Canadians will pick up litter along the shores of rivers, lakes and oceans starting on September 16, 2011.
Loblaw
WWF
3°C
Thanks to the plastic-bag charge, Loblaw has seen a 73% reduction in plastic bag production.
Each activity increases Canadians' awareness about conservation and caring for the environment. Awareness transforms to action, resulting in a big, positive impact on our planet.
Green CommUnity School Grants: Schools receive up to $200,000 a year in grants for conservation initiatives, such as growing gardens, installing solar panels and repairing bikes.

WWF would like to thank Loblaw Companies Limited for its commitment to conservation through the Plastic Bag Reduction Program. Loblaw has eliminated 2.5 billion plastic bags from existence and supported WWF's efforts to engage Canadians in environmental action. A simple bag charge has turned into energy conservation and awareness, cleaning up our shorelines, engaging schools in environmental activities and so much more for our planet. ***Thank you, Loblaw!***

Why we are here
WWF is creating solutions to the most serious conservation challenges facing our planet, helping people thrive with nature.

wwf.ca 1-800-26-PANDA

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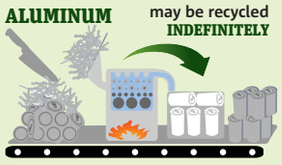
HOW DOES RECYCLING WORK?

ALUMINUM

may be recycled INDEFINITELY



Cans are shredded, washed, baled and sent to the factory. There they are turned into molten metal and recast.

PLASTIC

may be recycled MANY TIMES

Plastic recycling is more difficult than other materials. Bottles are cut up, crushed and baled. Bales are extracted and processed.

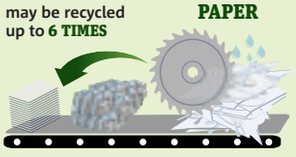
GLASS

may be recycled INDEFINITELY

Glass is crushed up and sent to the factory. There it is melted and put in mold to be blown again.

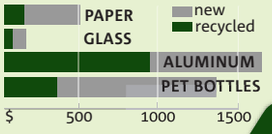
PAPER

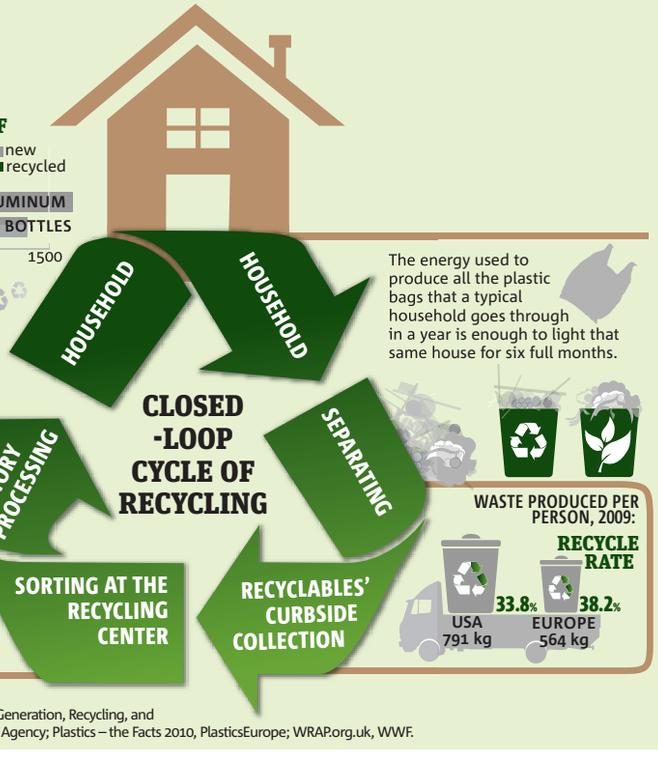
may be recycled up to 6 TIMES



Paper is baled and transported to the paper mill. There it is broken, deinked, repulped and added to the pulp of "virgin" paper.

RECYCLING PAYS OFF





The energy used to produce all the plastic bags that a typical household goes through in a year is enough to light that same house for six full months.

WASTE PRODUCED PER PERSON, 2009:

RECYCLE RATE

Sources: Europe as a Recycling Society, The European Recycling Map, European Environment Agency, 2010; Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling, and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures for 2009, US Environmental Protection Agency; OECD; US Environmental Protection Agency; Plastics – the Facts 2010, PlasticsEurope; WRAP.org.uk, WWF.

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HANDOUT

▶ Tyler Perry's Madea's Big Happy Family opens on Friday.

Spike fires up Perry

Director Tyler Perry has had enough of fellow African-Americans, especially Spike Lee, attacking him for his films ◐ Madea is back in Tyler Perry's Madea's Big Happy Family

NED EHRBAR
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN HOLLYWOOD

Tyler Perry has something he'd like to get off his chest. "Spike (Lee) can go straight to hell! You can print that," the self-made entertainment mogul says. "I am sick of him talking about me … I am sick of him talking about black people going to see movies. This is what he said: 'You vote by what you see,' as if black people don't know what they want to see."

The two filmmakers have hardly been close since Lee started lambasting Perry's work two years ago, saying that Perry's work is "troubling" and "harkens back to Amos and Andy." A war of words began between Perry and Lee, and Perry is ready to put the whole thing behind him. "Spike needs to shut the hell up," he says.

While Perry insists he tries his best to stay positive, the amount of criticism of him out there has reached such a level that he had to respond, culminating with a letter to fans he posted online this week warning of the "folks out there that work overtime trying to keep people from seeing my movies," including his latest, Tyler Perry's Madea's Big Happy Family, out this weekend. "I don't even understand it (but) this is where the whole Spike Lee (comment) comes from — the negativity, 'This is Stepin Fetchit, this is coon-ery, this is buffoonery,'" he says. "And they try to get people to get on this bandwagon with them, to get this mob mentality to come against what I'm doing.

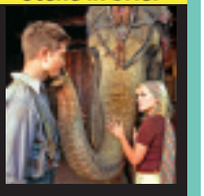
"I'm tired of just laying down, tired of just being nice and letting them say whatever they want to say however they want to say it without people knowing what the intent really is," Perry says.

What surprises Perry most is how much of the criticism comes from within the black community.

"I've never seen Jewish people attack Seinfeld and say, 'This is a stereotype.' I've never seen Italian people attack The Sopranos," he says. "It's always black people, and this is something that I cannot undo … . And I'm sick of it from us. We don't have to worry about anybody else trying to destroy us and take shots because we do it to ourselves."

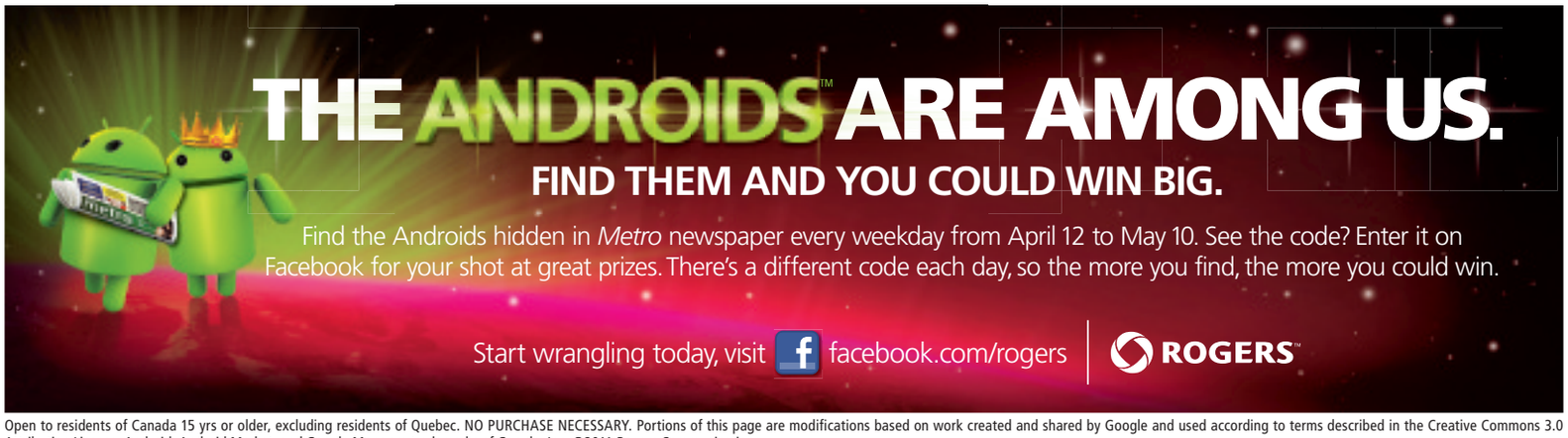
2 scene

Scene in brief



The Reel Guys discuss and review Water for Elephants, which stars Reese Witherspoon and Robert Pattinson and opens on Friday. To read the complete story go to metronews.ca/scene.

Canada's Nicolas Roy to compete for Short Film Palme d'Or at Cannes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Growing a garden full of music

Help Growing Chefs by suporting Growing Artists — Alanna Gurr, Henry Svec, DJ A Person Disguised as People, and others — at APK Live this Friday Alanna Gurr's unique style of folk/pop will go well with local food and drinks

BACKSTAGE PASS

AMANDA GRANT
METRO LONDON

When I arrive at Alanna Gurr's apartment near Victoria Park she's standing in her living room playing the electric guitar while a friend pounds out a rhythm on an old suitcase. Papers litter the kitchen table — the pair had been studying for their upcoming exams before they decided to take a music break — set lists and lyrics scribbled into notebooks strewn around the room.

Gurr spends her days at the University of Western Ontario studying piano tech — the art and science of tuning and refurbishing pianos — and her nights performing a unique brand of folk/pop.

On Friday night Gurr will take the stage at APK Live, along with Henry Svec and a number of other local and out-of-town artists, in support of Growing Artists.

Growing Artists is an evening of music, food and fundraising for Growing Chefs Ontario — an organization that educates children about healthy and sustainable living. Started in Vancouver, Growing Chefs came to Ontario in 2008, partnering with elementary schools to teach students how to plant gardens and grow produce that they later use to make meals.

CONTRIBUTED

Alanna Gurr will perform at APK Live to support Growing Artists to fundraise for Growing Chefs Ontario.

The Growing Chefs fundraiser will include performances from five musicians and dancing to a late night DJ set from A Person Disguised as People, as well as seasonal food and drinks created by local chefs.

"I'm always excited to play, but being able support this kind of initiative makes it better," says Gurr. "Plus, there'll be good food!"

Gurr says she plans to perform some new songs — a thought which makes her a little nervous.

"I get super anxious and I won't play them unless I can tell the audience is already into what I'm doing," she says. "Then I keep putting it off until I find the right audience."

The evening starts at 7 p.m. at APK Live, at the corner of York and Wellington and will be all-ages until 10 p.m.

Around town

- **Thursday** Start your long weekend off at Museum London with the launch of the gallery's four new exhibits, including ANIMAL, a multi-artist installation in which curator Corrina Ghaznavi challenges the generally accepted notion that humans are superior to other beings.
- **Saturday** Aeolian Hall will host Christine Fellows on her album release tour, promoting her bilingual record. Fellows will perform with Shotgun Jimmie, an indie rocker from Canada's East Coast. The show launches Aeolian Hall's Six Shooter Record concert series.

Movie reviews See it twice | See it now | Worth watching | Yawn | Don't bother

African Cats a mix of fun and learning

African Cats
Genre: Documentary
Directors: Keith Scholey, Alastair Fothergill
Stars: Samuel L. Jackson

Highlighted by the dramatic narration of Samuel L. Jackson, African Cats may be entertainment-focused, but it's still an informative documentary that looks at a pair of feline families struggling in the African Savanna. While danger lurks at every turn (from cub-snatching hyenas to river-roaming crocodile), filmmakers Keith Scholey and Alastair Fothergill accompany easy-to-digest storytelling with gorgeous images of wildlife in rare and stunning moments of natural suspense.

STEVE GOW

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., APR. 22 TO THURS., APR. 28. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. COMPLETE LISTINGS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT METRONEWS.CA/MOVIES.

LONDON

Mustang Drive-In -London 2551 Wilton Grove Rd., 519-644-1160

Arthur (PG) Fri-Sun 10:30 Tue 10:30
Hanna (PG) Fri-Sun 8:30 Tue 8:30
Hop (G) Fri-Sun 8:25 Tue 8:25
Insidious (14A) Fri-Sun 12:30
Just Go With It (PG) Fri-Sun 12:25
Scream 4 (14A) Fri-Sun 10:30 Tue 10:30

Hyland Cinema 240 Wharncliffe Road South, 519-913-0313

Listings not available at press time.

Rainbow Cinemas London 355 Wellington St., 519-434-3073

Listings not available at press time.

Western Film Room 340, UCC Building,

Battle: Los Angeles (14A) Fri-Thu 9:10
Rango (PG) Fri-Thu 7

Wellington 8 Cinemas 983 Wellington Rd. S, 519-685-2529

Arthur (PG) Fri-Mon 1:20-4-6:40 Tue-Thu 6:40
Hanna (PG) Fri-Mon 1:10-3:50-6:45-9:25 Tue-Thu 6:45-9:25
Hop (G) Fri-Mon 1:15-3:40-6:30-9:10 Tue-Thu 6:30-9:10
Insidious (14A) Fri-Mon 2-4:35-7:20-9:55 Tue-Thu 7:20-9:55
Rio 3D (G) Fri-Mon 1:30-4:10-7-9:30 Tue-Thu 7-9:30
Scream 4 (14A) Fri-Mon 1:40-4:20-7:10-9:50 Tue-Thu 7:10-9:50
Soul Surfer (PG) Fri-Mon 1:50-4:30-7:15-9:45 Tue-Thu 7:15-9:45
Water for Elephants (PG) Fri-Mon 1:3:50-6:50-9:40 Tue-Thu 6:50-9:40
Your Highness (18A) Fri-Thu 9:20

Cineplex Odeon Westmount & VIP Cinemas 755 Wonderland Road South, 519-474-2796

Arthur (PG) Fri-Sun 1:50-4:40-7:30-10:15 Mon 1:50-4:40-7:30-10:05 Tue 4:40-7:30-10:05 Wed-Thu 7:30-10:05 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Hanna (PG) Fri 1:30-4:20-7:10-10 Sat 4:20-7:10-10 Sun 1:30-4:20-7:10-10 Mon 1:30-4:20-7:10-9:50 Tue 4:20-7:10-9:50 Wed 9:50 Thu 7:10-9:50
Hop (G) Fri-Sun 12:50-3:40-6:30-9:10 Mon 12:50-3:40-6:30-9:05 Tue 3:40-6:30-9:05 Wed-Thu 6:30-9:05
Limitless (14A) Fri-Sun 2-4:50-7:35-10:20 Mon 2-4:50-7:25-10 Tue 4:50-7:25-10 Wed-Thu 7:25-10 Fri 1:20-4:10-7-9:50 Sat 4:10-7-9:50 Sun 1:20-4:10-7-9:50 Mon 1:20-4:10-7-9:40 Tue 4:10-7-9:40 Wed 7-9:40 Thu 9:45
Memphis (STC) Thu 7
The Metropolitan Opera: Capriccio (STC) Sat 1 Sat 1
Mulroney: The Opera (PG) Wed 7
Rio 3D (G) No Passes Fri-Sun 1:20-4:10-6:50-9:20 No Passes Mon 1:20-4:10-6:50-9:15 No Passes Tue 4:10-6:50-9:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 6:50-9:15
Scream 4 (14A) Fri 1:10-3:50-6:40-9:40 Sat 1:10-4:15-6:55-9:40 Sun 1:10-3:50-6:40-9:40 Mon 1:10-3:50-6:40-9:30 Tue 3:50-6:40-9:30 Wed-Thu 6:40-9:30 Fri-Sun 1:50-4:40-7:30-10:15 Mon 1:50-4:40-7:30-10:05 Tue 4:40-7:30-10:05 Wed-Thu 7:30-10:05
Source Code (PG) Fri-Mon 1:40-4:30-7:20-9:50 Tue 4:30-7:20-9:50 Wed-Thu 7:20-9:50
Water for Elephants (PG) No Passes Fri-Sun 1-4-7-10:05 No Passes Mon 1-4-7-9:55 No Passes Tue 4-7-9:55 No Passes Wed-Thu 7-9:55 No Passes Fri-Sun 12:50-3:40-6:30-9:20 No Passes Mon 12:50-3:40-6:30-9:15 No Passes Tue 3:40-6:30-9:15 No Passes Wed-Thu 6:30-9:15 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Wed 1

SilverCity London 1680 Richmond St, 519-673-4125

African Cats (STC) No Passes Fri-Thu 12-2:30-4:50-7:20-9:50
Arthur (PG) Fri-Mon 12:20-3:20-6:40-9:40 Tue-Thu 12:10-3:20-6:40-9:40
Fast Five (STC) No Passes Thu 12:01
Hanna (PG) Fri-Thu 12:50-4:10-7:15-10:10
Hop (G) Fri-Thu 1:10-4-6:35-9:10
Insidious (14A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:40-7:35-10:25
Limitless (14A) Fri 1:30-4:30-7:25-10:05 Sat 4:30-7:25-10:05 Sun-Wed 1:30-4:30-7:25-10:05 Thu 1:30-4:30-10:05
Memphis (STC) Thu 7
The Metropolitan Opera: Capriccio (STC) Sat 1
Rio (G) No Passes Fri-Thu 12:40-3:40-6:50
Rio 3D (G) No Passes Fri-Mon 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:40-10:10 No Passes Tue-Thu 1:25-4:25-7:40-10:15
Scream 4 (14A) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:20-7:30-10:30
Soul Surfer (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:30-6:30-9:20
Source Code (PG) Fri-Tue 1-3:50-6:45-9:30 Wed 3:50-6:45-9:30 Thu 1-3:50-6:45-9:30 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Water for Elephants (PG) No Passes Fri-Mon 12:25-3:45-7:10:20 No Passes Tue 12:20-3:45-7-10:20 No Passes Wed 3:45-7-10:20 No Passes Thu 12:20-3:45-7:10:20 Star & Strollers Screening, No Passes Wed 1
Your Highness (18A) Fri-Thu 10

Talking points

Pitt, Jolie pay well for their nannies

NOT CHUMP CHANGE. Not surprisingly, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie have some pretty steep requirements when it comes to nannies for their six children, a former applicant reveals to Popeater.

The famous couple reportedly employ a nanny for each child, and every child-minder is expected to have a college degree in education or child development and speak at least two languages, and any applicant must obviously be willing to travel. Pitt and Jolie reportedly pay their nannies between $50,000 and $150,000 a year. METRO

Timberlake going bald?

ROGAIN AD SPOT COMING. Justin Timberlake is reportedly stressing out about thinning hair, according to In Touch, with a source close to the singer saying concern about hair-loss is one of the reasons for Timberlake keeping his hair close-cropped.

"He's keeping his hair super-short so no one notices," the source says. "He's using specially formulated shampoo to promote hair growth. He certainly doesn't want to go bald."

METRO

Glee fans will be screaming

KEEP COOL Scream 4 star Emma Roberts was reportedly spotted getting cosy with Glee heartthrob Chord Overstreet while attending the Coachella music festival recently, according to Us Weekly.

"They were making out," a source says. "They couldn't keep their hands off each other."

And while they enjoyed the festival and its various parties, the desert heat might have been a bit too much for them.

"They were talking about heading to a hotel pool," the source says.

METRO

Celebrity tweets

@ImTracyMorgan

"Facebook asks what I'm thinking. Twitter asks what I'm doing. Foursquare asks where I am. The internet has turned into a crazy girlfriend."

@Joan_Rivers

"Trump allegedly hired detectives to find Obama's birth certificate. He could have made it a task on Celebrity Apprentice and saved money."

@emmyrossum

"Sat out by the pool for a bit and now my iphone now says it wont work because of temperature?? So, I put in in the fridge."

@howiemmandel

"Spent over 13 hours setting up a zip line in my bedroom. Then I just hit a wall"

Berry dishing on her court custody battles

Actress admits her and Gabriel Aubry needed serious help to get past it

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Halle Berry is opening up about her contentious custody battle with ex-boyfriend Gabriel Aubry.

"It's been a year full of challenges. When there's a child involved, it's a relief when you can resolve things in a good way," Berry tells Extra.

"Our issues were never about fighting for her. We both know a child needs both her parents."

But despite both being invested in their daughter's happiness, Berry admits she and Aubry needed serious help.

"We need a court and a judge to help us," she says.

METRO

▶ Halle Berry

▶ Charlie Sheen

Judge keeps kids from Sheen

Despite his estranged wife, Brooke Mueller, reportedly having a drug relapse last week and entering rehab this week, Charlie Sheen did not win back custody of his twin sons, Max and Bob, according to Radar Online.

A Los Angeles judge decided to continue Mueller's primary custody of the boys, though her mother will be watching them while she completes her treatment.

Charlie Sheen has been touring North America on a speaking tour that has been met with mixed reviews.

METRO

"A SPECTACULAR WONDER.
Easily one of the year's best films!"
Jake Hamilton, FOX-TV/Houston
"Astounding. Reese and Robert sizzle. A love story for our times."
Joel Amos, SheKnows.com
"A gorgeous romantic tale full of life, love and beauty."
James Rocchi, MSN Entertainment
WATER for ELEPHANTS
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3 life

Up and down

China
The Far East continues to be the promised land for luxury fashion brands. Burberry Prorsum just opened a flagship store in Beijing and will be having a lavish runway show there that will be streamed live on the company's Web site on April 13.

The false bump watch
The tabloids and celebrity blogosphere got it all wrong when they began circulating reports that Nicole Richie and Scarlett Johansson are expecting. "The irresponsible reporting continues to feed an atmosphere of self-doubt and insecurity," Richie said in a statement.

Daily life of African cats inspired jewelery designer and film-inspired pendant

CATWALKING

Move boldly into sprinter

That's a term some fashion people have started using to refer to those cold weather pieces mixed in with all the summery items hitting stores right now. It sounds oxymoronic, but in the fashion world, it's perfectly logical.

▶ Anna dello Russo wearing a wintry look from the Prada spring collection right after it hit stores, in winter.

KENYA HUNT
METRO WORLD NEWS

Fur stoles for spring? Sheer skirts for the dead of winter?

These days, it all makes perfect sense, with fashion designers paying little attention to the season for which they're creating clothing.

Yes, we all still need warm coats when it's cold out and something light and airy to wear in the heat.

But in the past year, some of those old rules like, say, thou shalt only wear sandals in summer, have changed.

From a business perspective, fashion houses are finally taking a look at the timing in which their clothes hit stores and the fact that women don't necessarily want to have to wait three to four months to be able to wear their spring or winter scores.

"The fact of the matter is, the weather is still very cold in most countries by the time the spring collections hit. It's a slightly old-fashioned mentality to be so controlled by the season," Zowie Broach, one-half of the London-based design duo Boudicca says of the phenomenon some editors have taken to calling "sprinter." She created fur-collared wool coats for her spring collection because she knew that "there are women in Russia who will buy these in March.

A cold-weather perfect jacket from Burberry Prorsum's spring/summer collection.

But even if the customer is in Las Vegas, she might want to wear that coat over a beautiful chiffon dress on a chilly night."

Prada's hugely popular spring collection featured outsize brightly colored fur stoles that at first glance seemed like an odd choice for the season, but ended up being one of the most coveted pieces of the year with shoppers snapping them up as soon as they hit stores in late February. Meanwhile, Burberry Prorsum showed quilted leather jackets that could work just as well in January as April.

"Right now, it's less about 'spring' or 'summer' and more that it's a 'new season.' When it's cold out, you want a new, great coat. It's as simple as that," Broach says.

"Women want to buy and wear things immediately. The hunter/gatherer isn't storing anymore," she adds.

Global e-commerce sites like Net-a-Porter further stoke the winds of change.

"As an international business, seasonless dressing is very relevant to us," says Holli Rogers, buying director at Net-a-Porter.

"There is nothing more frustrating than not being able to find something when you need it most. Many of the brands we stock now offer multiple collections that include pre, cruise and high summer.

"With this increased frequency of new arrivals throughout the year, we can offer more choice to our customer wherever she may be, from New York to Australia to Moscow," she adds.

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Beauty pick

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Orange Discrete: petigrain, bergamot, mandarin zest and orange blossom mixed with vetiver, cedar and musk $28, anthropologie.com

Fall in love, carefully

If you follow your head as well as your heart, your dream home will also be your best investment

KELLY PUTTER
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA

First-time homebuyers should behave like investors because that's how they'll save money and ultimately live a happier life, says Don Campbell, a Vancouver real estate expert.

"If you prefer not to save money, then think like a homebuyer," says Campbell, an investor who analyzes and writes about the Canadian real estate industry.

And while it's tough to approach your first home with your brain instead of your heart, Campbell recommends looking for certain criteria in the area you like that will encourage you to make a wise decision.

"You fall in love with a house in a neighbourhood that has a future and not a past," he says. "Buy in an area where the property values will go up."

Buying close to a train or LRT station is a good idea because those properties are predicted to rise in value 15 per cent more than similar properties that aren't near a station, he says.

It's also smart to work your mortgage like an investor, says Campbell. So on a $300,000 variable-rate mortgage, choose to pay back the higher monthly payment of a five-year locked-in mortgage.

Yes, the payment is more than you're required to pay, but 100 per cent of the extra payment goes off the principal. After five years, you'll have paid the same total as a locked-in same total as a locked-in mortgage, but with this method a lot more comes off your principal and you've paid a lot less in interest payments.

Determining a few key factors before hitting the bricks is a good idea for first-time homebuyers, says Rob Faulkner, president of the Nova Scotia Association of Realtors.

Faulkner says it is vital that buyers determine what they can afford, choose a few locations that work for their lifestyle and buy a home based on lifestyle and the ability to maintain it.

Check it out

Home inspections provide impartial snapshots on the condition of a home.

- Expect a report highlighting major deficiencies, if any, and a comprehensive description detailing the shape of the furnace, the roof, the foundation and so on.
- Find Registered Home Inspectors (RHI) at cahpi.ca. The average inspection cost is $400.

FLICKR: WOODLEYWONDERWORKS

▶ Don't take your chances — experts say it's worth investing the time to know exactly what you're buying into.

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LONDON TRANSIT NEWS

Easter Friday, April 22, 2011

Buses will operate on a Sunday schedule on Friday April 22, 2011 in observance of Easter Friday.

Downtown Ticket Office will be closed on Friday, April 22. Regular service hours will resume on Saturday April 23, 2011.

my bus info
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The Royal decor frenzy

Karl Lohnes offers tips for helping you decorate to celebrate Prince William and Kate's big day

DESIGN CENTRE

KARL LOHNES
HOME@
METRONEWS.CA

It's only one week away from the Royal wedding and the world has all eyes focused on Britain.

It's only natural that home decorating fanatics cash in and do a little royal decorating to celebrate this historical soiree.

Forget about the stodgy gold-rimmed teapots and dollar bin tea towels, here's a list of fabulous British-inspired decorating accessories that are sure to turn your house into a royal celebration of its own.

Its always nice to have a reminder of the Royal wedding. I'm not quite sure what happened to the porcelain platter of Charles and Diana I purchased at their wedding.

Most likely ended up in a yard sale many moons ago.

This time around I might buy something trendy that I'll be proud enough to display.

The Big Ben Clock from Urban Barn ($80) is 4-feet tall and would look fabulous hung on the small wall in the foyer.

Never to be late and always in style!

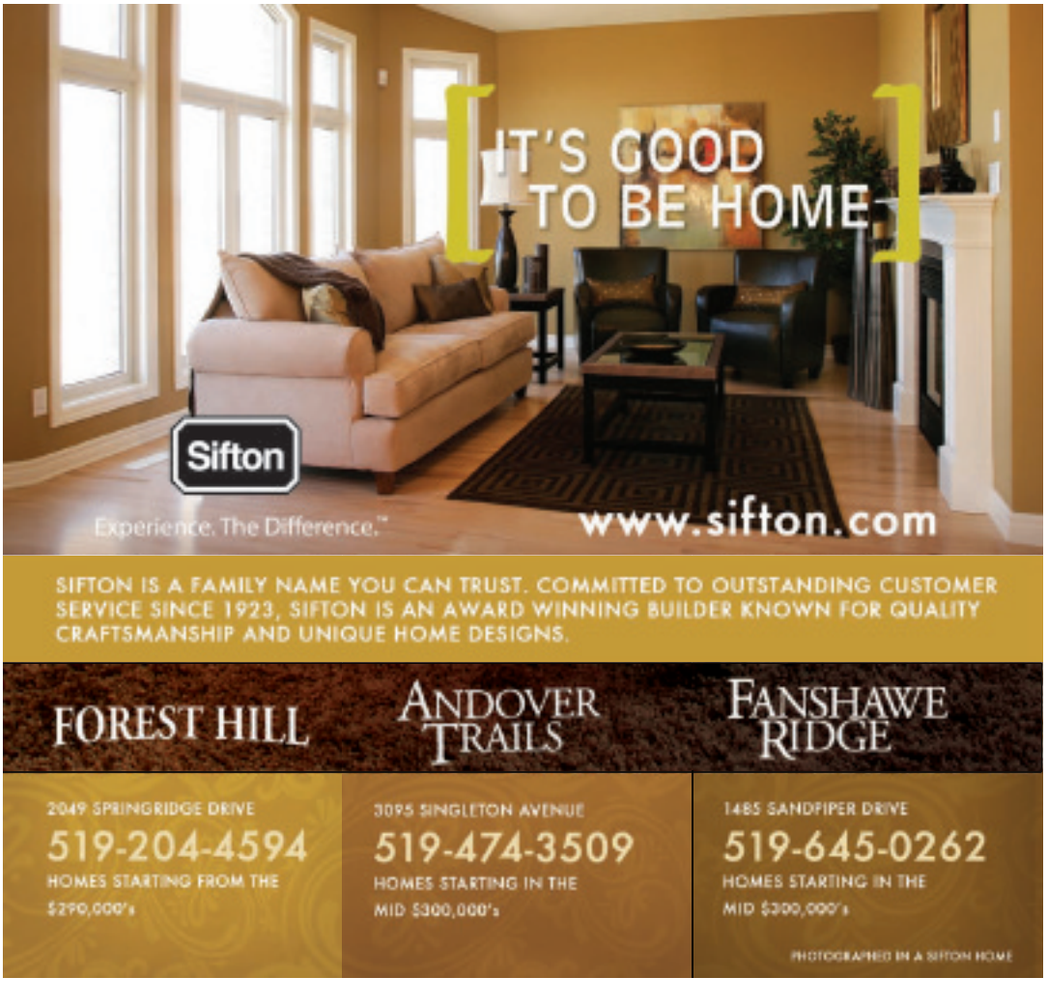
I'm thinking a large printed wallpaper would look great hung inside my walk-in closet for impact.

The illusion of having many crowns just might start a few royal rumours amongst those who visit.

In terms of entertaining, I'm thinking of waking up early and having a royal brunch at the house. Serving things like Cream of Earl Grey Tea from David's Tea in my new Keep Calm mugs from Keepcal mandcarryon.ca and serving up a custom English Garden Wedding ice cream cake from Baskin Robbins will add a punch of British whimsy to the occasion.

Am I that crazy about the Royals? I am considering painting my small den a vibrant purple and Royal Throne P5149-63 from Para Paints is on the top of my list!

Teamed with some dark brown wood furniture, a charcoal grey upholstered sofa and a funky Union Jack wall plaque from Urban Outfitters, and I'll achieve a room handsome enough to attract any Prince.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▶ Union Jack wall plaque, Urban Outfitters, $40.

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▶ Crown and Coronet wallpaper from Graham and Brown Wallpaper, Home Depot.

SUBMITTED

▶ Custom Royal wedding ice cream cake from Baskin Robbins, from $29.

An effortless yet elegant Easter dinner

This Four-Hour Leg of Lamb is an example of the wonders you can work when you're not even in the kitchen Its flavour will 'wow' your guests

BOTH PHOTOS: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ MATTHEW MEAD

This recipe cooks the lamb to well done. If you prefer the lamb less done, start by checking it after three hours until it reaches the desired temperature.

DINNER EXPRESS

EMILY RICHARDS
FOOD@METRONEWS.CA

Easter dinner isn't meant to be a rushed affair. And neither should the meat you serve. But it doesn't mean you have to work particularly hard at it. This flavourful, slowly roasted leg of lamb from Sarah Raven's cookbook, Fresh From the Garden is simple but elegant.

Preparation:

1. In very large resealable plastic bag, combine wine, garlic, cumin, coriander, olive oil, salt and pepper. Mix well. Add the leg of lamb, close the bag and toss well to cover. Stand the bag upright (or double bag) in a large bowl and refrigerate for 24 to 48 hours, turning the bag every few hours to coat the meat.

2. In large roasting pan, arrange carrots, onions, leeks and garlic in an even layer. Place the leg of lamb over the vegetables, then pour the marinade in the bag over everything. Roast in 300 F (140 C) for 4 1/2 hours. Remove the pan from the oven and transfer lamb to a serving platter. Cover the lamb with foil, then a layer of kitchen towels. Let rest for 30 minutes.

3. **Gravy:** Meanwhile, heat stock in saucepan over low. Use a slotted spoon to discard vegetables from the roasting pan. Let the liquid in the pan rest for several minutes, then spoon off any visible fat. Set the roasting pan over 1 or 2 burners and heat over medium, scraping the bottom with a wooden spoon to loosen any stuck bits. Sprinkle in the flour and cook, stirring constantly, for another 1 to 2 minutes.

4. Slowly pour the hot stock into the roasting pan, stirring until it becomes a smooth gravy. Stir in the port and jelly, then simmer for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper Slice the lamb and serve with the gravy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ FRESH FROM THE GARDEN BY SARAH RAVEN (UNIVERSE, 2011)

Ingredients:

- 1 bottle (750 mL) dry white wine
- 5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) each cumin and coriander seeds, toasted and coarsely ground
- 5 tbsp (75 mL) olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) each salt and ground black pepper
- 1 leg of lamb (about 5- to 5 1/2-lb/2.2 to 2.45 kg)
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 2 onions, chopped
- 3 leeks, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic

Gravy:

- 2 cups (500 mL) meat stock
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) flour
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) port or red wine
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) red currant jelly
- Salt and black pepper

Artichoke & Asparagus Salad

While the Easter dinner meat is an affair not meant to be rushed, doesn't the side dishes can't be made quickly. Here is an easy Artichoke and Asparagus Salad. It not only celebrates Easter but also the spring season.

Preparation:

1. Bring large pot of water to boil. Set a large bowl of ice water next to the stove.

2. Blanch asparagus in the boiling water for about 4 minutes or until bright green and just tender. Transfer to the ice water to cool and stop the cooking. Drain well.

3. In large bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, thyme, Dijon mustard, lemon rind and juice, salt and pepper. Gently toss the drained asparagus spears and the artichoke hearts in the dressing.

4. Serve sprinkled with the feta cheese.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EMILY RICHARDS IS A PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND A TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA.

Ingredients:

- 2 bunches fresh asparagus, trimmed
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) olive oil
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) white balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp (10 mL) chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp (5 mL) Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp (5 mL) grated lemon rind
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) each salt and ground black pepper
- 2 cans (14 oz/425 mL each) artichoke hearts, drained
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) crumbled feta cheese

Sip wine and save the planet

Some wineries are teaming up with environmental organizations to raise funds for many eco-friendly causes

Sip a pinot and save the planet?

That's the thinking behind wineries teaming up with environmental organizations to raise funds for trees, seas and land.

One of the latest is Clean Coast wines, the brainchild of California winemaker Susie Selby.

The owner of Selby Winery created the wines, available online, and in Mississippi and Louisiana, with the goal of raising awareness of the Gulf Coast recovery effort.

"I spend a lot of time in Louisiana. It's just a place that's near and dear to my heart," Selby said. After the 2010 oil spill she decided she wanted to do something to help the area on a long-term basis, so she came up with Clean Coast wines.

The four wines — pinot noir, chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon and merlot — carry labels decorated with marine creatures. From every bottle sold online (cleancoastwines.com) $4 is donated to the Greater New Orleans Community Foundation.

For Selby, raising money is also a way to cut through the slightly intimidating image that can be associated with wine.

"It's an honour to give back through wine," she said, "because people are still enjoying the food and wine experience, but are also able to make a little bit of a difference."

Other wineries are branching out in different eco-related directions.

For example, Root 1, produced in Chile, is a long-standing partner of Global ReLeaf, a branch of American Forests.

By the end of 2011, winery officials estimate Root 1 and Global ReLeaf will have planted more than 40,000 trees in forest restoration projects around the world.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 sports

Quoted

"I was really lucky in the end ... I hope I have the chance to recover properly and play better (Thursday). I'm just happy I came through."

MILOS RAONIC, OF THORNHILL, ONT., WHO LED 6-2 IN THE FINAL SET TIEBREAKER WEDNESDAY, BUT HAD TO HOLD OFF A RALLY FROM GERMAN SIMON GREUL TO ADVANCE TO THURSDAY'S THIRD ROUND AT THE BARCELONA OPEN.

JONATHAN DANIEL/GETTY IMAGES

▶ The Blackhawks' Bryan Bickell scores on Canuck Roberto Luongo Tuesday night.

Canucks say they'll be fine after loss to Hawks

- 'They are going to respond really well (Thursday),' says coach Vigneault
- Vancouver did lose four games in a row this season in November

The sooner the Chicago Blackhawks are finished, the better it will be for the Vancouver Canucks.

Vancouver has pushed the Blackhawks to the brink of elimination by taking a 3-1 lead in their NHL Western Conference quarter-final series.

The Canucks want to give the Hawks that final shove Thursday night (CBC, 7 p.m. ET) to extinguish any flickering hopes the defending Stanley Cup champions have of climbing back into the best-of-seven series.

"You need to have that mentality that you have to finish them off," Canuck forward Daniel Sedin said Wednesday after Vancouver practice.

"If there's a Game 6 or a Game 7, it's a different series. You are happy being up 3-1. We have home ice and this is a rink we love to play in. We will be ready."

The Canucks blew a chance to sweep the Hawks out of the playoffs when Chicago pounded them 7-2 in Tuesday night's Game 4. It was the first time in the series the Hawks showed flashes of the team that has eliminated Vancouver from the playoffs the last two seasons.

Defenceman Kevin Bieksa said the lopsided loss will only be a problem if the Canucks dwell on it.

"It's essential we put it behind us and move forward," said Bieksa.

"If we come out with a different mindset and play the way we did in the first three games, we should be fine."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL's top GMs

Vancouver's Mike Gillis, Nashville's David Poile and Tampa Bay's Steve Yzerman are the three finalists for the 2010-11 NHL General Manager of the Year Award.

JIM MCISAAC/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Jeff Halpern

Halpern set to return for Habs

Jeff Halpern was skating on the wing at the Montreal Canadiens practice on Wednesday, but where they may need him most is in the faceoff circle.

The 35-year-old looks ready to return after missing the final four games of the regular season and the first three of the playoffs with an undisclosed injury.

Coach Jacques Martin, true to form, would not confirm that Halpern will dress for Game 4 on Thursday night at the Bell Centre.

Montreal leads the best-of-seven series 2-1, but is coming off a 4-2 loss at home on Monday night.

"It's a call we'll make (Thursday)," said Martin. "He's an experienced player who played a major role in our penalty killing. He's a smart player who brings a lot of leadership to the dressing room."

Halpern says he has fully recovered.

"I feel good, we'll see what the coaches decide," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Dodgers taken over by MLB

Major League Baseball is taking the extraordinary step of assuming control of the Los Angeles Dodgers, a team increasingly paralyzed by the bitter divorce of owners Frank and Jamie McCourt.

Once among baseball's glamour franchises, the Dodgers have been consumed by infighting since Jamie McCourt filed for divorce after 30 years of marriage in October 2009. It came one week after her husband fired her as the team's chief executive.

Frank McCourt accused Jamie of having an affair with her bodyguard-driver and performing poorly at work.

"I have taken this action because of my deep concerns regarding the finances and operations of the Dodgers and to protect the best interests of the club," commissioner Bud Selig said Wednesday in a statement.

Selig's move might be seen by some as a precedent should the New York Mets have additional financial problems. With owners Fred Wilpon and Saul Katz under pressure from a lawsuit tied to the Bernard Madoff swindle, the Mets borrowed $25 million last year from Major League Baseball.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DAVID RAMOS/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Lionel Messi of Barcelona holds off a swarm of challengers Wednesday during Real Madrid's 1-0 win at the Copa del Rey Final in Valencia, Spain.

Spanish soccer shows the money

Yankees fall out of No. 1 spot in British study ◗ Ten NBA franchises and eight MLB teams cracked top 30

Barcelona and Real Madrid have overtaken the New York Yankees as the best-paid global sports teams, according to a British study.

The review published Wednesday showed annual average pay during the 2009-10 season was $7.9 million US at Barcelona and $7.4 million at Real Madrid.

The Yankees are paying their players an average of $6.8 million this season. The team last year topped the review, which is compiled by sportingintelligence.com and is being published by ESPN The Magazine.

The NBA's Los Angeles Lakers and Orlando Magic occupy the fourth and fifth spots.

Chelsea, Manchester City, Manchester United, Liverpool and Arsenal also are among the 30 best-paid teams, making the Premier League the richest soccer league in the world.

46

The Toronto Raptors were the top-ranked Canadian franchise at No. 46 with an average annual pay of $3.92 million.

The report looked at average first-team pay in 14 of the world's leading sports leagues, including Aussie Rules Football and cricket's Indian Premier League.

The Vancouver Canucks ($2.64 million) ranked 88th, ahead of the Ottawa Senators ($2.63 million) at No. 89, Montreal Canadiens ($2.52 million) at No. 93, Calgary Flames ($2.48 million) at No. 96, Toronto Maple Leafs ($2.27 million) at No. 118, Toronto Blue Jays ($2.02 million) at No. 139 and Edmonton Oilers ($1.90 million) at No. 150.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sports in brief

Champs League ticket prices skyrocket

SOCCER. Michel Platini, the president of European soccer's governing body, apologized Wednesday for the high price of Champions League final tickets. A ticket that cost 90 euros ($125) in 2009 will cost 175 euros ($243) in 2011.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Little progress in NFL talks

LOCKOUT. The NFL and its locked-out players wrapped up their fourth day of court-ordered talks Wednesday with few signs of progress and no plans to meet again until mid-May. U.S. District Judge Susan Richard Nelson is expected to decide well before then on the players' request for an injunction to immediately lift the lockout, now in its 40th day.

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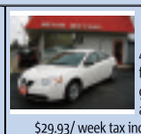

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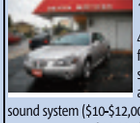

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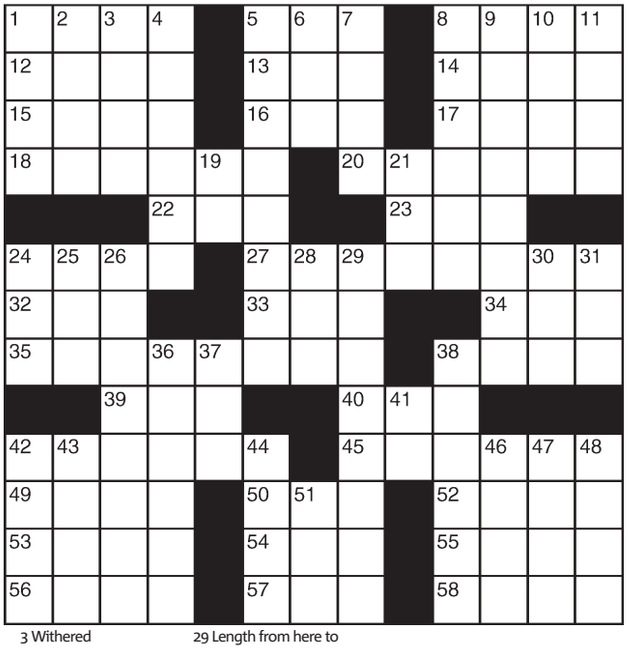
Crossword



Across

1 Larger portion
5 Belle of the ball, maybe
8 Enos' grandpa
12 Conception
13 Wrath
14 Missile shelter
15 Standard
16 Bando of baseball
17 Despot
18 Saw things in the dark?
20 Sleeping sickness carrier
22 Mainander's memento
23 Slip up
24 Green gem
27 Full exposure
32 "The Greatest"
33 Helgen-berger series
34 "Barney Miller" actor Jack
35 Periods of relief
38 Mail carrier (Abbr.)
39 Hall-of-Famer Williams
40 Stannum
42 Not digital
45 Impact
49 For fear that
50 Novelist Radcliffe
52 Colorful fish
53 Appointment
54 Fond du —, Wis.
55 Toy block name
56 Lacked originality
57 Candle count
58 Skittish wildlife

Down

1 Have an objection
2 Stench
3 Withered
4 Mexican entree
5 Separate
6 Detergent brand
7 Region
8 Toward the rear, nautically
9 Woe
10 "Oh, woe!"
11 Still others
19 Yours truly
21 Witness
24 Mayo container
25 Hearty brew
26 Aversion
28 Work with
29 Length from here to there
30 Bribe
31 "Help!"
36 Struck repeatedly
37 Altar affirmative
38 Open out
41 In that case
42 "M*A*S*H" star
43 Tide type
44 Festive
46 Duel tool
47 Zoo structure
48 Hammer-wielding deity
51 Kvetch

▶ Yesterday's answer

M	A	I	L			I	F	S		P	S	A	T
I	P	S	E			A	D	O		A	N	N	E
C	O	L	D	S	N	A	P			R	A	T	A
A	D	A	G	E			H	A	M	P	E	R	
				E	X	A	M		C	A	B		
D	E	B	S			T	I	E	R		E	S	S
A	R	E		M	O	X	I	E			A	H	A
B	R	A			A	P	E	R		A	N	E	W
			N	A	M		D	E	A	L			
M	A	P	L	E	S			B	A	S	S	O	
I	D	O	L			P	O	L	E	S	T	A	R
S	A	L	E			A	N	Y		K	A	N	E
O	M	E	N			T	E	E		A	Y	E	S

Sudoku

	5	3	6		8	4	2	
6	7						1	9
		4	7		1	6		
	8			6			9	
		7	2		9	5		
7	1						4	3
	2	8	9		3	1	6	

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

9	3	7	1	5	8	6	4	2
6	2	5	3	9	4	8	1	7
4	1	8	7	6	2	9	5	3
7	5	9	4	2	1	3	8	6
8	6	2	5	3	7	4	9	1
1	4	3	8	6	9	2	7	5
2	7	1	6	4	3	5	6	9
3	8	6	9	1	5	7	2	4
5	9	4	2	7	6	1	3	8

Send a KISS

You can now post your kiss, and read even more kisses, online at metronews.ca/kiss.

Olu, I want you to know how much I appreciate you, your hard work doesn't go unnoticed. You bring so much love and joy into my every day, I couldn't do this without you. My soulmate, you make my heart smile. **FROM BELLA**

LAUREN, I love you so much. Thank you for two perfect years. Will you go to prom with me? **FROM LIAM**

Little YumYum
You mean so much to me I cant even put it into words. I love you so much babe, I cant wait to see you today! Thank you for always being there. **FROM CAT**

MRP
weeks we're apart just aren't as good. being away from you turns me into a total puppy child. **FROM @LUCKYJODI**

Today 8°/2° Partly cloudy
Friday 9°/6° Cloudy
The Weather Network Download WeatherEye to your smartphone.
TWN incorporates MSC data

Today's horoscope

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 As Venus, planet of harmony, moves into your sign, you will be more charming than usual.

♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 What you think is a problem isn't much of one at all. Try not to get worked up about it.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 Sort out your thoughts and realize that you exaggerated the importance of recent events.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 You'll enjoy your work today. As such, you'll do a good job.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23 You don't have to take life too seriously. The purpose is to have fun.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22 Do you feel someone is cheating you? Most likely, it's just your fears getting the best of you.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 It's a great day for affairs of the heart. Put away anger. Love makes the world go 'round.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 If you need a break take one, no matter how much others try to persuade you not to.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 A little charm will go a long way over the next 24 hours.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 Forget about getting even with your enemies. Turn them into friends instead.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 Something you hear might make you look at certain people in a different light.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. Don't worry about cash. You'll find ways to make ends meet.

SALLY BROMPTON

Caption contest

VADIM GHIRDA/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DARKO VOJINOVIC

WIN! You write it!

Write a funny caption for the image above and send it to play@metronews.ca — the winning caption will be published in tomorrow's Metro.

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